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THE 'LIVELY PEGGY.'

BY STANLEY J. WEYMAN.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE Rectory, the Cottage and Budgen's were not the only roofs in Beremouth over which a cloud—though for the hopeful a cloud with a golden lining—hung during these days ; or beneath which hearts leaped and fluttered like frightened birds at any unusual sound. There were low-browed windows by the water-side that in winter the spray lashed like a whip and the spindrift darkened, whence even as early as this anxious eyes night and morning searched the offing. There were humble dwellings in lane and alley, where on hot days grotesque sea-shells held the doors open, in which seamen's almanacks were painfully thumbed by the light of tallow dips, while untravelled minds groped about distant seas, or drank in the talk of old salts, who, called to council, prated of shoals and currents and dealt out outlandish names, the Berlings and the Farallones and the like. Women, old and young, but with the same hungry look in their eyes, flocked to meet the Plymouth boat, if by good hap it brought news ; or ran to the wharf if word went round that a yawl from Falmouth had been driven in by weather. On the quay, men, leaning against posts or sitting upon upturned boats as their forefathers had leant and sat in Armada days, yarned and debated in soft, slow Devon voices, searching the horizon for weather signs, prosing on the set of tides, sailing old voyages, telling old tales.

In all this there was nothing new to Beremouth. So it had been with its forefathers who had sent their seven ships to Sluys—a proud feat never forgotten and often wrangled over : for, picturing the seven as tall three-deckers or frigates at the least, they never ceased to wonder how they had contrived to lie within the little breakwater or got depth of water. Now, as then, women feared and prayed, and old men, hiding their tremors behind gnarled hands,

swore that there was no ground for fear. If news was slow and late to come they quoted Christian's gales, or told off the weeks that this or that squadron had spent, beating up from Alexandria to the Straits. So it had always been in Beremouth, and so it was still. Men came back, or they did not come back. Women turned to see a shadow fall on the doorstep, and he was there! Or a darker shadow crossed the threshold and the sea had taken one more, and made of another wife a widow. It was the way that life ran there and in a hundred coastward places, when war added its risks to the perils of shoal and gale.

But on Peggy these things fell with the weight of the new and the untried. She had not been wont to lie awake and tremble when the south-wester shook the walls and rattled the casements, or the sullen gun of some passing ship struck a knell in listening ears. She had not learned in the school of patience the long, long lesson of waiting. Nor had she, like some, been a wife so many years as to be weary of her man, indifferent, care-free.

Yet she bore up, living the past year over again, clinging to its memories as to her most precious possession, hoping steadfastly, praying humbly, praying, indeed, with desperate fervour when the winds blew. Yet—for the Cottage on the cliff stood neighbourless—there were nights when she would fain have been anywhere but where she was; when panic gripped her, and she would for choice have been in the closest alley, the darkest lane by the water-side, if she might have had beside her women in like case to whom she might cry her fears from the window and share theirs, and so have been less alone with her fancies. For on the cliff-face the winds had their will, and of rough nights the voice of the sea, as it strove with the point, rose up and menaced her with its thunder.

In the day-time she was glad to be there. From her windows as from an eyrie she could sweep the distant offing for a sail, and not seldom she sat hours on the watch, though she knew that her search was useless, that no return could be looked for yet, and that the odds were that news would come another way. She wearied her eyes with gazing, now into the shining distances, now at the white work on her lap; while the Captain, watching her with furtive solicitude, saw that she looked with each day more fagged, her features sharper.

But she bore up bravely. None the less when Charlotte walked in rather abruptly one Monday, some ten days after the brig's departure, her agitation told a tale. Her hand flew to her breast,

and such colour as she still had deserted her face. 'Not news?' she cried. 'Not——'

'No!' Charlotte said bluntly. 'News? Certainly not! It is not to be expected yet. You know that, silly. But I bring something else, and something worth having.'

'What?' And still she could not drive the anxiety from her voice, nor the eager look from her eyes.

'A friend—if you will see him. If not—if you had really rather not, there are no bones broken. He is not here to worry you.'

'A friend?' Peggy repeated in wonder—she had so few. 'Not—not——'

'It's Sir Albery,' Charlotte said. 'That's all, my dear. He is outside if you would like to see him.'

Peggy's pale face flushed. 'Oh, I don't,' she stammered, 'I don't think that I——'

'But I think,' Charlotte rejoined, seeing how it was and determined to take the thing into her own hands. 'I want you to see him, Peggy. It will be good for you, dear. He is a true friend—and they are not to be picked up in every ditch. They are rare, my dear,' Charlotte repeated, her colour rising a tone. 'And he is true as steel and loyal as——'

'As you are yourself!' Peggy exclaimed, tears rising to her eyes. 'You dear girl! No sister was ever——'

'Sister!' Charlotte ejaculated. 'Don't compare me to a sister if you please—unless you want to quarrel with me! Sisters indeed! A plague on your sisters! I wouldn't give that for one, from what I see of them!' And she snapped her fingers. 'No, I bring you a brother, and that's another kind of thing, or I'm mistaken! Sister!' Charlotte repeated, anxious to give Peggy time to recover herself. 'If he don't stick closer than a sister I'm a bigger fool than I think I am! Let me fetch him.'

A prey to more emotions than one, Peggy hesitated. Then 'Fetch him,' she said.

He came in a little awkwardly, but his greeting was simple and like himself. 'We cannot,' he said, 'have too many friends, Mrs. Bligh. And I dare not lose one.'

'I am blessed in two,' she replied, smiling through her tears.

'In one you are certainly blest,' he said gravely, and he looked at Charlotte. 'I envy her and I congratulate you. Such friends are rare, Mrs. Bligh.'

'That is agreed,' Charlotte said—but her eyes shone. 'We

settled that before you came in, sir. You must find something new to say.'

'I thought that Charlotte might have news!' Peggy said, eyeing him closely. She could not get away from that—from the hope and the fear.

'We must not expect it yet,' he replied cheerfully. 'Perhaps in another fortnight we may begin to look for it. Mr. Bligh has made so many long voyages—I suppose he has spent half his life at sea—that he would smile at our expectations.' And deftly turning the conversation to Bligh's experiences, and in particular to his service in the *Naiad* when she had cruised, as a part of Sir Borlase Warren's squadron, off Arcachon, he pressed the matter. He had never heard the rights of that affair; he would be glad to hear them. Peggy was induced to tell the story, and grew warm in the telling. Her eyes shone, she reddened with indignation, she looked a different creature. Charlotte, seated close to Wyke, murmured 'Bravo!' in his ear, and pleading ignorance of the sea-terms that Peggy uttered so glibly, egged her on. Sir Albery chimed in, echoing the wife's indignation at the scurvy treatment that Bligh had suffered at the Admiral's hands—but he was a man with a certain reputation, he added: arbitrary, he had heard, and too proud to own to a mistake. 'Not popular in the Service, I am told. Such men—but possibly I may misjudge him—hamper themselves, and lack support when they most need it. A stiff man, I gather, though I may be mistaken.'

By the time that they had judged and condemned Sir Borlase—rightly or wrongly—and Wyke had drawn a sharp contrast between him and the sailors' idol Nelson, who never, he said, forgot the man who sailed under him, and resented a slight to one of his captains as an offence against himself, they were all on easy terms, and Peggy had for twenty minutes at least forgotten her anxiety. Charlotte, viewing the change with delight, could not refrain from repeating 'Bravo!' under her breath, and when Wyke coloured, laughed aloud. Apparently he had thought out the subjects he would raise, for he passed on to the wonderful luck that some ships had, and quoted the case of the *Thetis* and the *Santa Brigida* eighteen months before. The capture had been worth forty thousand pounds to the captain of the lucky frigate, and five thousand to each of the lieutenants.

'But little enough to the crew, I expect,' Charlotte said.

'No, indeed. I believe every A.B. took a hundred and fifty.'

'Well, that was a stroke of luck!' she agreed, while Peggy's eyes grew thoughtful and she immersed herself in calculations.

'But we must not expect such luck as that,' Sir Albery said cautiously, and he explained the circumstances. Then it was Charlotte's turn. She had seen the Exeter paper, and she brought the prospects of peace on the carpet. It was believed to be very near. There was talk of a meeting to settle the terms—at Amboise or at Amiens—she could not remember which, but it began with an 'A.' She thought Amiens, and she was explaining why, when a tap on the door surprised them.

Peggy rose. 'I am afraid,' she said with a touch of her old gaiety, 'it is the baker. If you call at a cottage, Sir Albery, it must not shock you if the bread comes in through the parlour.'

'Those are not the things that shock me,' he said. 'Let me be your footman.'

But Peggy was before him. She opened the door, and there, confronting her, stood her sister, her hands in her muff.

'Augusta!' Peggy cried.

It was an awkward moment for Augusta; more awkward than she knew, for Peggy's figure filled the doorway and Augusta did not see that there were other visitors in the room. If she had, her greeting might have been different. 'Well, my dear,' she said good-humouredly, 'you've brought your pigs to a pretty market!' She had to break the ice, and it seemed to her well to do it at once and thoroughly.

'Come in,' Peggy answered. 'I have visitors,' she added a little shyly. She made way for the other to enter.

Out of the tail of her eye Augusta, as she crossed the threshold, saw who they were, and she felt that the fates were against her. But she would not have been Augusta if she had not made the best of it. She would have embraced Peggy, but she did not know how her sister would take it, so she contented herself with pecking her cheek. 'Dear Peggy!' she said. 'So here you are! And here I am! Father at last, dear——' she seemed for the first time to recognise Charlotte, and, breaking off, nodded gaily to her. 'Well, I never!' she exclaimed, 'this is an unexpected meeting!'

'Perfectly!' said Charlotte.

'And Sir Albery! I confess'—in her annoyance Augusta could not refrain from the thrust—'I did not expect to find you here!'

'No?' he said. 'Yet I do not see why, Miss Portnal.'

She had no answer ready, and while he busied himself pushing forward a chair Charlotte replied for her. 'Augusta is a little late herself,' she said. 'However, never mind, Augusta,' she continued in a rallying tone. 'Better late, my dear, than never!'

For once Augusta had need of all her aplomb. She felt the atmosphere unfriendly, and the notion that Sir Albery and Charlotte had called in company was upsetting. But she smiled, and ignoring Charlotte's hit, 'I am relieved to see Peggy looking so well,' she said. 'I can see that you have done her good already.'

'Oh, don't give us the credit,' Charlotte retorted. 'I've no doubt it's the surprise of seeing you has brought the colour to her cheeks. So it's a pity you did not come before, my dear.'

Sir Albery, who, man-like, hated a scene, put himself between them. 'I think Mrs. Bligh is looking better,' he said.

'The better for seeing you all!' Peggy replied. Then, turning timidly to her sister, 'I hope that my father is well?' she said.

'Quite well,' Augusta rejoined, and played her trump card, the value of which she had only grasped during the last minute. 'He bade me give you his love, Peggy.'

The colour fled from Peggy's face, and returned with a rush. 'Oh, I am glad!' she murmured. 'I am glad. Thank you, dear.' She gripped one hand in the other in the effort to control her emotion, but the tears rose to her eyes.

'Well, that's something,' Charlotte said grudgingly. 'I hope that he's on the way too. It is time, I am sure.'

'I think he will be soon,' Augusta replied.

'At any rate he has let you come.'

'Yes.' Augusta managed without more to convey the impression that she had striven to that end and succeeded. 'But that is not all, Peggy,' she continued in a lower tone. 'He sent you his blessing, dear.' She knew, as she said it, that she had risen to the top of the occasion and done herself justice.

Peggy looked at her with brimming eyes and with difficulty stifled a sob. Sir Albery saw that she was agitated and he rose. 'I must be going,' he said. 'I am glad to leave you, Mrs. Bligh, so much happier, and with one care removed.'

'I must be going, too,' Charlotte said. 'I am glad that some people are coming to their senses, Augusta. Good-bye, my dear. See you soon, but never more glad to see you than here and now. And heart up, Peggy! Courage, and courage, and again courage! All will be well.'

She hugged Peggy, and was moving towards the door, which Wyke had opened for her, when a sound caught their ears and drew their eyes to one another. It was not an uncommon sound in that place, for it was only the tread of someone descending the steep path, and it was even possible to say who it was—the clump of the Captain's wooden leg attended each tread. But the pace was hurried, it was the pace of one who brings news, it arrested not only the ear but the heart. Charlotte paused, Wyke stepped out to the wicket. Aware of the open door and the listening ears behind him, he grasped the need of caution, and he passed through the gate. He was in time to meet the Captain, who, out of breath, was pegging his way down the track. Wyke raised his hand. 'Steady!' he said in a low voice. 'We must not alarm Mrs. Bligh, sir!'

'No, no,' the old man stuttered; but in his eagerness he still tried to go by the other. 'No! It's—it's not that!'

'Steady!' Wyke repeated the word more sharply. He barred the way. 'Have a care! For God's sake, sir, don't frighten her!'

But the Captain was already at the wicket, and it was too late. Peggy had broken from Charlotte's grasp; she had come out to them, and the others followed perforce. They stood grouped on one side of the fence, Wyke and the Captain on the other. The old man, panting and struggling for breath, rested his trembling hand on the wicket. His face worked. For a moment, a moment of suspense for all, he could not speak.

Then 'There's news!' he gasped, and at the word Charlotte slipped her arm round Peggy. 'Not—not bad news!' he got out jerkily. 'No, no! Not bad news, thank God! But—but strange—strange news if it's true!' His voice whistled in his throat. 'If it's true!'

CHAPTER XXVI.

CAPTAIN COPESTAKE, retired Master Mariner of Portsea, had much to be thankful for. At home and abroad he had the comforts that the hearts of sailor-men desire. Within-doors he had a clean hearth, a well-ordered house, as much rum as was good for him, and leave to smoke his pipe—for Mrs. Ozias was a reasonable as well as a notable woman—everywhere except in bed; to say nothing of plum-duff frequently and tripe on Fridays. On Sundays he enjoyed all

the solace that a long-winded minister and an approving conscience could give him, lived his sins over again, and luxuriated in the remembrance—he called it the repentance—of them. Abroad he had his house of call, his own special chair, in winter by the fire, in summer beside the snug red-curtained window, and he was never without a shilling in his pocket.

Then he had the Hard to walk on and Gosport to visit when he needed a sea-change ; to say nothing of a number of old cronies with whom to pass the time while he shared with them the labour of propping up the posts on the quays, or levelling a glass from the Platform. There was not a craft in harbour between Porchester Castle and the Blockhouse that he did not know from coamings to masthead, that he had not surveyed and measured until he knew her lines with his eyes shut ; nor, as long as daylight lasted, did a vessel pass the Point, inward or outward, laden or in ballast, from His Majesty's three-deckers riding high in their pride to the humblest long-shore tub, that he and his fellows did not mark her handling, criticise her master, commend or deride. The port, gay with bunting and movement and the show of war, noisy with the ringing of hammers and the 'Heave-ho !' of chanting maties, was Ozias's picture-book, ever open, its pages ever turning and of interest ; and he knew it as a College Don knows his 'Odes' or his often-studied 'Æneid.'

It was an ideal life ; such a life as the seaman, aloft in rocking gales, or battling on deck with icy seas, dreams of, as of a haven far off and hardly attainable. And Ozias admitted his good fortune. Yet, so weak is human nature and so strong is habit, that there were days when he was not as well content as was reasonable ; when his wife's apron-string irked him, and he resented the watchfulness of the black eyes that owned him. At such times the plum-duff seemed too rich, the yarns of his fellows palled, and even the excitement of the Point and the sad seamanship of the younger school lost their power to engross him.

'I be an unregenerate toad, Jonah,' he would say, when driven to open himself to a congenial spirit. 'The old Adam's in me to that extent there's times when I think the ways of pleasantness are not for me, so dyed I be in the dip of wickedness. So dyed I be,' he continued gloomily, his eyes bent on the water beneath him, 'that no fuller on earth can bleach me.'

'Your woman has done something that way,' the other replied slyly. 'She ha' tried anyway, Ozias.'

'Ay, she ha' tried,' Ozias agreed despondently. 'She be too good for me, Jonah.'

'A good woman as women go,' Jonah said cautiously. 'Her puddings, I am told——'

'Ay, rare. Rare they be—and filling. But'—Ozias sighed as he scanned the offing—'there's days when, God forgive me, I'd give 'em all for a morsel of hard tack and a tot from the rum-tub, and to be running free with a clear sky and a spanking breeze abaft and a prize in chase! D'ye see the guns ready to run out, Jonah, and the lads stripped at their quarters and the beauty you're aboard of lifting and lurching with a following sea and the long swivel ready to throw a shot across her?' Ozias groaned, and 'God forgive me, Jonah!' he went on. 'I know they be the flesh-pots of Egypt, but there be days when I smell the salt and I do hanker—I do hanker after them.'

'I tell 'ee what it is, Ozias,' his friend said. 'You be wanting a glass.' He looked hopefully at the Admiral Vernon, not a stone's throw away. 'A glass be what you be wanting, and you'd tell your blessings.'

'I'd ought to, I'd ought to! And I'd not say it wouldn't hearten me,' Ozias agreed, and he was about to turn in the desired direction when something caught his eye. 'What be that silly brigantine a-doing?' he demanded in a brisker tone. 'Does the d—d tailor think he can get in with this wind?'

The wind was due north and there were half a dozen sail standing off and on, waiting for it to shift that they might enter the harbour. Three of these had been there since dawn of the day before, and the skilled eyes turned on them knew them for victuallers inward bound from Gibraltar or the Channel Squadron. Two others had come up in the night, a timber ship from Norway, and a sloop of war—her number and name were known and the bum-boats had already raced out to her with soft tack and vegetables. But the sixth, a brigantine with a patched foresail, had only come up Channel at midday. If the wind held there might be presently a score standing off and on opposite Southsea beach waiting to slip in, for in those days to reach a harbour and to enter it were two different things.

It was the handling of the brigantine that had caught Copestake's eye. She seemed to be doing her best to effect the impossible by beating into port in the wind's eye. 'Working his jacks for the sake o' working!' he commented sourly. 'She'd need be quick in stays or the fool will pile her up on Haslar!' He spat contemptuously into the water.

'She be signalling!' said the other. 'That's what she be come in for, Ozias.'

'Ay, so she be,' Ozias agreed. 'Now what's that for?' He scanned her with a knowing eye. 'Levant trade, d'you think, Jonah?'

'There or thereabout.' A moment later, 'She's asking for a saw-bones I wouldn't wonder.'

'And putting out a boat! May be despatches! They'll come to the postern.' On which the two men, glad of any distraction, straightened themselves and yawned, and after pausing, first to assure themselves that the boat was coming in, and secondly to take that glance round the offing without which no old salt turns from the sea, they made their way towards the stairs. Ozias forgot his discontent, and Jonah postponed his afternoon dram.

But a meeting with a friend at the end of the Platform detained them, and there were other idlers on the front. By the time they arrived, Ozias and his mate found themselves cut off from the stairs by a curious crowd, five or six deep. The brigantine's boat slid in, and the seamen manning it tossed their oars inboard under a hail of questions, the answers to which did not reach our couple in the rear. They had to make the best of the information that filtered through to them second-hand, and largely mingled with oaths.

Ozias caught a word here and there, and presently he gripped the man before him to ensure attention. 'What? Six, d'ye say, mate?' he asked.

'Ay, six! And two put overboard day 'fore yesterday. Cut about terrible they be, 'cording to them. They've come in for a saw-bones to sort 'em to rights, 'fore they land 'em.'

'The Frenchies was it?'

'D—n 'em, who else should it be?'

'But she ain't marked!' Ozias urged impatiently, pinching his victim. 'She come off the port at eight-bells noon, you must ha' seen her! She've not a scratch nor a splinter o' white wood about her! Nor a gun aboard, you fool!'

'She took 'em off! Took 'em off, I tell ye!' the man retorted irritably. He wanted to listen, not to talk. 'Have ye no ears on ye? South of Ushant 'twas, off a——'

'Off what?'

'Off a brig she took 'em—Letter o' Marque—crippled and like to sink! Corvette—French sloop o' war, ye understand—in company, and leaking like hell! Don't know,' the man continued

with a sudden burst of enthusiasm, 'as I ever heard the like, blast me if I did! Dismasted the Frenchman they did, and bore off and on, raking her fore and aft, till she struck! And not fifty of a crew! Corvette closed once but fell away 'fore they could board, d—n 'em!'

'Fore the sloop could board?'

'Ay, ay! Who else! The brig hammered her for hours, she did, and took her at last! By G—d, she did! She took her!'

'Took the corvette?' Ozias exclaimed incredulously. 'Took the Frenchman?' And again he shook the man, who in his desire to pick up more was at his mercy. 'D'ye mean it, mate? Took the corvette? The Letter o' Marque did?'

'They did, I tell ye! So these chaps say.'

'Well, I'm d—d!' Ozias said, disentangling the tale at last. 'That's a rum thing as ever I heard.'

'Rum?' the other swore, dancing up and down on his toes in his appreciation. 'The rummest thing I ever heard talk of! Lord sink me, man, I could kiss the chaps that fought her, blast their eyes. But there, it's no good pinching me, I don't know no more than I've told you, and the boat's hauling off to wait for the surgeon. She come up, this here brigantine, and found 'em refitting and pumping to save their lives—both leaking like sieves—and took off the worst of the wounded. Left the two crippled in a sea, and doubtful seemin'ly if they'll bring 'em in.'

'Well, I'm a sinner!' Ozias exclaimed. 'A sloop o' war, mind ye! Why, she'd ha' ninety of a crew at the least! A hundred more like!'

'She was waiting for her, so they think!'

'And caught a Tartar!'

'By gum, she did—caught a Tartar and no mistake!' the man swore with gusto. And the crowd beginning to break up amid laughter and some cheering, he turned to his tormentor. 'Hang me, if you ain't pinched my arm black and blue!' he said reproachfully. 'But it is worth it and all! Don't know as I ever heard the like!'

'I'll treat,' said Ozias briefly. 'Come along of us, mate, and we'll wet the news. Did ye hear where the Letter o' Marque hailed from?'

The man hadn't caught the name. But soothed by the prospect of a drink he called to a neighbour who was also turning away, and asked him. This man had heard the name—the name of the port

and of the brig—and he told them. To his astonishment Ozias gripped the speaker by the arm. ‘Skipper hurt?’ he cried. ‘Eh? Did ye hear, man?’

‘Ay! Splinter, side of the head! Knocked silly, they say, but kept the deck like a good ’un and saw it through! D’ye know him?’

Ozias did not answer, and to this day the man whose arm he had pinched black and blue thinks him the meanest of swabs. For, forgetful of his offer and of everything but the news that he had heard, Ozias turned his back on his new friend and the Admiral Vernon, deserted his mate, and at a clumsy seaman’s trot made away for Portsea. What he said to the buxom woman who owned him, or how he dealt with her, is not recorded, but a lugger that went out at sunset, bound for Plymouth, carried Ozias as a passenger, and the morning light saw him landed at the Barbican.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THAT was the news that Captain Copestake brought to Beremonth on that fine May day in 1801. Old Captain Bligh happened to be in town: his attention was drawn to the excited group that had gathered about Ozias, he approached, and Ozias, breaking away from the others, drew him aside and told his story—told it with such reservations as, being a man of slow but sure wits, he thought proper. He said nothing to the old man of the shattered state in which the *Lively Peggy* and her prize had been left, or of the doubts entertained of their safety. Bad news would travel fast enough, details such as these could wait; and for himself he judged that the man who had captured a French sloop of war with a crew outnumbering his own two to one was not the man to let a craft sink under his feet. Sufficient for the day was the deed, and for Beremonth the triumph. And loudly Ozias hymned it.

To some he told more, but he cautioned them. ‘His wife’s in a delikit state,’ he explained, with more consideration than might have been expected of him. ‘No need to scare her, mind ye! But, Lord bless you, he’s not the man I think him if he don’t come through and bring his sheaves with him!’ Like most sons of the open sea Ozias was a generous soul, and if he had captured the corvette himself he could not have been more triumphant, or bragged with stronger oaths of the glory accruing to Beremonth.

The story had flown abroad and was known half-way up the steep street before the old Captain, gathering his scattered wits together, limped away, the heart that beat so tumultuously in his lean breast overflowing with pride and thankfulness! With all his eagerness to tell the news he was more than once forced to stop and wipe the sweat from his brow; nor could he ever remember how he climbed the hill to the churchyard. But the determination to be the bearer of the tidings gave him strength, and he arrived at the Cottage as we have seen, his legs trembling under him and his tongue disabled by excitement.

'Strange—strange news if it's true!' he gasped again, his voice breaking. Poor man, his life had known few moments of triumph, and this was such a moment. It seemed too good to be real.

But Wyke, alarmed on Peggy's account, was impatient of delay. He could have shaken the old man. 'For God's sake, say what it is, sir!' he urged. 'Don't you see that you are frightening Mrs. Bligh?'

'He's—he's taken a French corvette!' the Captain stammered. 'She attacked him—he's taken her! A sloop—sloop of war, d'you understand? He's—he's taken her!' He waved his arms in his excitement.

Peggy snatched herself from Charlotte's arm. 'Is he there?' she cried, prepared to fly to him. 'Is he there?' She tried with a shaking hand to open the wicket. What did it matter what he had taken if he was there?

'No, my dear, no,' the Captain said, a little sobered. 'He is not there, no! But news has come. A vessel that came into Portsmouth yesterday brought the—the news.'

'But he was safe?' she breathed. 'You are sure?'

'Safe? Yes, my dear, safe—quite safe, I understand.'

'Thank God!' she cried. For her that was all. 'Thank God!' She burst into tears and hid her face on Charlotte's shoulder, while the other patted her like a mother.

'There, there, my dear,' Charlotte said. 'Look up and think what great news it is! He's safe! He will be with you soon.'

'But a sloop of war?' Wyke said, dwelling on the words. He dreaded a mistake. The old man was excited, was beside himself. And it was a strange, an improbable tale. Could it be that he had heard amiss? 'You are quite sure, Captain Bligh? Who brought the news from Portsmouth, pray?'

'Copestake! He saw the vessel that brought in the—the

wounded. And he came away at once. South of Ushant it was, the Captain continued more glibly, his tongue loosened now that he had his breath. 'Some think that she was waiting for them. The *Peggy* crippled her main-mast and bore off and on, raking her while the corvette could not bring her broadside to bear. But she brought down the *Peggy's* mizen-top—that's what I understand—and before Charles could clear away the raffle she fell alongside and they'd ha' boarded, but by the mercy of God the *Peggy* slipped clear before she could fasten to her. And then they—they went on hammering her!'

Peggy raised her head, and her eyes shone like stars through her tears. 'He meant to do it!' she cried. 'He meant to do it! And I knew that he would do it, if he lived! Oh, let us thank God for it!'

'It's wonderful news!' Sir Albery said warmly—but there was still a spice of doubt in his tone. 'Wonderful news! And I congratulate you, Mrs. Bligh. I congratulate you with all my heart!'

'Dear Peggy!' Charlotte said, 'dear little heroine! And I know of more heroes than one,' she added, her eyes on Wyke.

'They are all heroes!' Peggy cried. 'The poor brave men!' But that was not what the other meant. 'Were there many hurt?' she continued timidly.

'Six were landed,' the Captain murmured, thinking that the less said about that matter the better.

'A great feat!' Wyke pronounced warmly. 'A noble feat. I really hope that he may be reinstated, Mrs. Bligh. We must see that the facts are known. Such a thing has not been done since the Falmouth Packet beat off the *Atalante*! The country will ring with it, or I am mistaken!'

Peggy bloomed. 'Oh, you think he may!' she cried, clasping her hands in a transport of gratitude. 'You think he may!'

'I think it is possible,' Wyke said more cautiously. 'We must do what we can to spread the facts.'

She was all tearful thankfulness, and would have stood there in that blessed spot, tasting and savouring the news for an hour, if Charlotte had not intervened. 'You must come in now, Peggy,' she said. 'You really must, my dear.'

'Yes,' Wyke said, 'and I see there are some people coming down the path. They have heard the news, I expect, and we had better go in for a moment, and then leave Mrs. Bligh to herself.'

'It is not joy that hurts me,' she said, smiling happily. 'Oh, I do thank, I do thank Heaven!'

But she complied. Wyke and Captain Bligh went in with them. They all crowded into the cottage, filling the little room.

Wyke had been right in his conjecture, as the next minute proved. Less thoughtful than Copestake, or believing with Peggy that joy does not harm even 'delikit' women, a score of enthusiasts from the water-side had started out to honour the hero, and wish his partner joy. They had gathered strength as they marched through the town, spreading the news and singing 'Hearts of Oak'; so that by the time they halted before the cottage and lined up along the path they were a hundred strong—watermen, old salts, quay loafers, a rough crew, singing, laughing, cheering, but to a man moved by honest pride in the thing that had been done, the thing that had glorified Beremouth. Someone stepped to the front, as they ranged themselves with their faces to the cottage, and, lifting his hand, set them once more thundering in unison 'Hearts of Oak are our ships! Hearts of oak are our men,' the stern and moving air that in the Service of that day summoned men to quarters and to battle.

There was more than one heart within the cottage that rose high on the strain, more than one of those present whose eyes brightened. But when, the song ended, the leader of the band called for three cheers for Captain Bligh, and three cheers for the *Lively Peggy*, and the cheers were given with a will that shook the very walls of the cottage, Peggy surprised them all. Charlotte would have held her back, fearing the effect upon her; and Augusta would fain have done the same, deeming it beneath her sister to take notice of the men. But Peggy would not be restrained. She opened the door and went out; and when the rough fellows looked on the young wife's face, aglow with pride and wet with tears, every head was bared and every tongue was silent.

'Dear friends and neighbours,' she said—and her clear, sweet voice, tremulous with feeling, touched a chord in the rudest breast—'I thank you from my heart. God bless you, and may He bring all safe home to us!'

That was all; but how they cheered her, as Charlotte, laughing and nodding, drew her in again! In their enthusiasm they would have stayed and cheered interminably, but Sir Alberty went out, gave the leader a guinea to drink Mrs. Bligh's health, and with the guinea a hint; and they trooped away tumultuously to the

Privateersman and the Keppel, there to celebrate the occasion in a fitting manner. It was felt, indeed, in the little port that to go sober to bed that night was a tempting of Providence, a thankless act, or, in Captain Copestake's phrase, 'a cheapening of vouchsafed mercies!'

But if there was triumph down by the water, and in the little room on the cliff-face where the old man and the girl-wife sat hand-in-hand a thankfulness as deep, here and there in lane and court there were quaking hearts and anxious faces. Distracted women to whom the news had come in fragments ran from door to door, asking questions that none could answer. They invaded Copestake in his cups, plucked at his sleeve with fluttering hands, insisted on knowing 'Was my Bill hurt?' or 'D'ye know aught o' my Jack?'—questions that caused that mariner sad discomfort. For the story of the six wounded had gone abroad, and where there were wounded there were like to be dead. Ozias swore to each that her man was safe; but the comfort was cold, there was no telling, and one woman, ignorant of the distance, started at day-break to tramp to Portsmouth, carrying her babe with her. She was sent back four days later by the Exeter wagon, at the cost of a charitable Justice who had heard her story.

Strange to say, though within half an hour of Copestake's coming the town was humming with the news, no one conveyed it to the Rector, deeply as he was concerned in it. It was his sermon-day, an occasion that came but once in three weeks, and his order that he was not to be disturbed on that day was imperative. Even so, Wignall hesitated. He felt that the tidings excused much, and he went as far as the door. But the Rector's temper had been odd of late, and with his hand on the latch the butler's heart misgave him, and he retreated. So the Rector wrote on in peace until late in the afternoon. Then having completed his task he felt the need of a breath of fresh air, and issuing forth he took his hat and gold-headed cane and left the house. The first persons whom he met as he entered the churchyard were Augusta and Sir Albergy Wyke, returning from the Cottage.

There had been a little awkwardness when Wyke, after the departure of the crowd, had risen to take leave. The two girls had risen also; their way and his way were the same, and for a moment they had looked at one another—women will understand how. Then Charlotte, impelled by a feeling of which she was afterwards ashamed, suggested that Augusta might like to have a few minutes with her sister.

But Augusta had put the offer by with a smile. 'Not to-day,' she said, her hands in her muff. 'Peggy will like to be alone to think it over.'

Peggy didn't say her nay, and Charlotte, despising herself, hastened to announce that she was going home by the road, and before the others could move had taken herself off. Finesse was not in her nature, she could not imagine what in the world had possessed her; and she scolded herself roundly. 'I'll write "plain Charlotte" on a piece of paper,' she determined, 'and perhaps that will remind me not to make a fool of myself!' And then, 'I am as mean as she is,' she thought with shame, 'and without her excuse.'

Wyke and Augusta, therefore, had left together, Augusta, as they walked, dilating with sisterly affection on this happy turn in Peggy's fortunes. 'I am so glad,' she added, 'so glad that my father suffered me to go to her—before this was known!'

'It was very well,' Wyke replied. He could not banish a certain dryness from his tone.

'It is such splendid news!' Augusta continued with rapture. 'Such a surprising thing, too!'

'Yes,' he agreed, 'it is—if the story be true, Miss Portnal.'

It had not occurred to Augusta to doubt it. She did not know enough of the things of the sea to appreciate its uncommon nature, though it had crossed her mind to question its propriety. A dispensation that allowed misconduct to be condoned and disobedience rewarded seemed to her improper. She would have died before she would have owned to the feeling, but it recurred, and it underlay her tone as she answered with a certain uplift in her voice. 'You feel some doubt, then, Sir Albery? You don't feel sure that the news is true?'

'Well,' he admitted soberly, 'it is such a very unusual thing for a private vessel to have the better of a warship that—that I am afraid I do doubt. As a rule such a ship surrenders when overtaken by a force so superior—the odds are too great. If she should resist the cost of victory must be heavy, yet we hear of no loss of life—only of six wounded—a light bill. Still, I don't see how Copestake could be mistaken, and Captain Bligh no doubt told us the tale as it was told to him. We can only trust that there is no mistake, for the blow to your sister whose hopes have been raised would be cruel! Cruel!' he repeated with feeling.

'It would indeed,' Augusta agreed. 'Poor, poor Peggy! It is so much more than she can have expected!'

'Than anyone can have expected! Let us hope that the story is true.'

It was at this point that they saw the Rector's portly figure coming towards them. 'Oh, father!' Augusta cried, as they met. 'Isn't it wonderful?'

'What, my dear?' he said. 'What is wonderful?'

'You have not heard the news—of the brig?'

The Rector's heart lost a beat. But he saw that, whatever the news was, it could not be bad. 'What is the news?' he asked. 'And who brought it?'

'Copestake,' Wyke answered. 'He heard it at Portsmouth and came over with it. According to him the *Lively Peggy* fell in with a French corvette off Ushant—a little to the south, I understand, and engaged her and has taken her!'

'Taken her!' the Rector exclaimed in astonishment. The others could see that he was moved—and shaken. But they attributed his agitation to the surprise that was natural.

'Fought her and taken her!' Sir Albery repeated. 'So the story goes. It's amazing if it be true.'

'And—and Bligh?' The Rector's eyes as he spoke avoided theirs.

'He is said to be safe,' Wyke replied. 'That is certain, I understand. We've just come from Mrs. Bligh's. What is it, Rector?'

For Portnal had drawn in his breath in an odd way. 'Only—a little spasm,' he explained. He took out his handkerchief and passed it across his brow. 'Nothing! nothing! He's safe, then—Bligh?' he added. 'You are sure of that, Wyke?'

'Certainly—if Copestake is right.'

The Rector surprised them both, his daughter more than Sir Albery. 'Thank God!' he said in a tone so earnest, and so different from the pitch of his voice in church, that Wyke got a new view of him. 'Thank God!' he repeated reverently. 'I—I was afraid for my daughter!' And again, as if he could not contain himself, 'Thank God!' he repeated. 'He is very merciful!' Then, recovering himself and in a voice more like his own, 'A shock to her would be—would be very serious just now,' he said.

Wyke had never liked the man so well. He had never known him as he was, it seemed. 'Just so,' he agreed heartily. 'But I'd better tell you the story.' And he repeated Ozias's tale as he had had it from the old Captain, to whom, as we know, Copestake had

not communicated all that he knew. 'It's an amazing feat,' he said in conclusion, 'look at it how you will.'

'If it be true,' Augusta suggested, recalling the misgivings that he had expressed.

The Rector frowned. 'Is there any doubt about it?' he asked.

'I don't think so,' Wyke said. But he spoke as if he did doubt. 'I don't see how there can be, Rector. If a landsman had reported it, I should feel, I confess, great doubt—a good deal of doubt. But Copestake——'

'Copestake should know,' the Rector agreed, welcoming that view of it. 'Anyway the news should be in the journals in a day or two. You did not hear who the wounded were?'

'No; Copestake came away without waiting to learn particulars. It would have been better if he had waited, I think.'

'It would,' the Rector decided. 'Certainly it would. I think I will send a messenger to Portsmouth to see the men in hospital and to learn particulars—and what can be done for them. But I suppose the brig may be in at any time now?'

'I'm afraid not yet,' Wyke said. 'The brigantine that brought the news appears to have entered the Channel before the wind shifted from west to north. But Copestake thinks that the brig and her prize would meet a head-wind while still in the Bay, and may not be in for some days. They were still refitting when the brigantine left them, and the sea was getting up.'

'They'd beat to westwards?'

'No doubt they'd get off the French coast as soon as possible. Copestake put them about a degree west of the Penmarch, and thought that if the sea was not too high they might land in the boats such of the prisoners as they did not need for working.'

'Maybe. He should know. Well,' with a sigh that betrayed a lingering anxiety, 'I will go on.' And nodding to Wyke in a way that showed that his thoughts were elsewhere, he pursued his walk.

He was thankful, profoundly thankful. More than once he bared his head and his lips moved. But mingled with his thankfulness, underlying it like a tiny but deadly snake hidden beneath a basket of luscious fruit, were misgivings that he strove to ignore. He had some knowledge of sea matters and he had a vision of the brig and her prize heaving, a cable's length apart, in broken water, with the brig's guns shotted and bearing on the Frenchman. He could hear the wind screaming through the raffle of torn cordage,

and the shattered mast beating against the hull that trembled with every shock. He saw the French crew driven under hatches, and men naked to the waist labouring in a frenzy of haste to cut away the crippled spars—men with bandages about their heads, working in fear of their lives to set up jury masts. He saw the look-out sweeping the offing in mingled fear and hope, heard the hoarse orders, and read the alarm in men's faces, heard their curses, as the wind shifted to north and forced them to beat out into the Atlantic!

He tried to put misgiving from him. All had gone so well, so much had been done and won, if this marvellous story was true, that surely the skill and courage that had wrought wonders might be trusted to surmount the difficulties that remained. But he strove with less success than he could have wished. At moments the spectre of a Nemesis would lift its head, would shadow his thoughts, would haunt him; and, fond of money as he was, he would willingly have lost all that he stood to gain for the certain news that the *Lively Peggy* lay safe in port.

Yet it was hard to suppose that there was a mistake. Copestake—Copestake should know, if anyone did! So, little by little, he reassured himself. He walked more briskly. He swung his cane and put his years behind him, cheered by the pleasant air, the peaceful scene, the evening stillness.

(To be continued.)

MEN NOT MEASURES.

AN EXPERIMENT IN POOR LAW ADMINISTRATION.

BY EDITH SELLERS.

WHETHER, as a choice of evils, it is better to have a good law badly administered, or a bad law well administered, may be a moot point so far as most laws are concerned. With regard to poor laws, however, it is quite otherwise, as the experience of every country in Europe that has a poor law proves. In pre-War days I watched in turn the working of the poor relief systems in force in all those countries; and in every country I found that, whether the poor fared badly or well, whether a good return or a bad return was obtained for the money spent on them, depended very much more on how the law was administered than how it was framed. Again and again I saw a poor law which, so far as I could judge, was a bad law, being made by skilful administration to yield excellent results. Again and again I also saw a good law, one framed with infinite care, yielding very bad results, simply because it was badly administered. The Elberfeld system, for instance, is undoubtedly an admirable system. None the less when, many years ago now, it was tried in Berlin, where, for obvious reasons, it could not be well administered, it proved a complete failure and led to something near akin to disaster.

In Switzerland, the happy hunting ground of theorists and experimentalisers, I found twenty different poor laws in force, and twenty-five different poor relief systems. For each of the twenty-two cantons and the three half-cantons had the right to frame a poor law and a poor relief system for itself; while not only they but, in most of the cantons, the urban and rural communes might each administer the law in its own fashion. Even the smallest of the cantons, one no bigger, perhaps, than our average market town, might, in fact, deal with its poor just as it chose, so long as it neither beat them nor prevented their getting married. Nay, it was even free not to deal with them but just to leave them to starve, unless, indeed, they rose in revolt against being starved, and caused an uproar. In that case, if Federal troops had to be sent to quell the rising, the Bundesrath must interfere. Thus, in what concerns poor

relief, it was in Switzerland, I found, as if in England, every county or county borough council was free to make a poor law for itself, and every urban or rural council to administer the law as it chose. The result was, of course, that the most diverse poor relief arrangements were in force.

In some of the cantons I visited the poor fared extremely well; they were treated most humanely, wisely as well as kindly. In other cantons they fared very badly; they were practically the slaves of the petty local authorities. In others again it depended on the charitable how they fared, as all the authorities did for them was to give them the merest pittance, and leave them to fend for themselves. There were districts where the State children lived in comfort, either in the cottages of carefully selected foster-parents or in model orphanages; and everything that could be done was done to give them a fair chance of starting life on terms of equality with their fellows. There were, however, also districts where the State children were put up for auction and knocked down to the lowest bidder, *i.e.* the bidder who offered to take charge of them on the lowest terms. The whole treatment of the poor varied, in fact, from canton to canton; and it varied not with the merits or demerits of the poor law in force, but with the merits or demerits of the men who administered it. Of that there was proof and to spare; for there were cases in which the treatment of the poor was good in one canton and bad in the very next, in spite of the fact that in the two cantons the poor laws in force were identical.

While in Switzerland there are many poor laws, and the honorary officials who administer them have no higher authority, here in England we have only one poor law, and its honorary administrators are, in theory at any rate, under the direction and control of a higher authority, the Ministry of Health. None the less, curiously enough, the treatment of the poor varies from town to town, district to district, almost as markedly here as there; while the treatment of those who must provide the money spent on the poor varies very much more markedly here than there. Wherever I went in Switzerland I found that, no matter how much or how little was spent on poor relief, a good return was obtained for every penny spent; while in England there are, as we all know, towns where the marvel is what becomes of all the money the poor rate yields, so meagre is the return obtained for it. But then the Swiss are thrifty by instinct, whereas we, sad to say, are made quite differently.

Notwithstanding that difference of temperament, however, not only does the treatment both of the ratepayers and of the poor vary from town to town in England, just as it does in Switzerland ; but the factor that determines how and why it varies is the same in the one country as in the other. Here, as there, everything depends not on the law in force, not on the system, but on its administrators, Poor Law Guardians here, Local Authorities there. If our Guardians do their work as it ought to be done, and can be done, humanely, skilfully, and economically, all goes well both with the ratepayers and the poor, even under our Poor Law as it stands, bad law though it be in some respects. Of that there is proof to be found in a fairly large number of towns, and notably in those towns where Mr. Chamberlain's Commissioners are doing the work done elsewhere by Guardians. Already more than thirty years ago, indeed, there was even more decisive proof of it to be found in Sheffield, thanks to an experiment which a Board of Guardians tried there, an experiment to which very special interest is now attached. For whereas the very air is alive with schemes for the reform of the Poor Law, it seems to be taken for granted that, with regard to its administrators, no reforms are needed. Were the Government's Poor Law Reform Bill to pass, as it stands, poor relief would still be administered, in a very great measure, by the same persons as administer it now ; it is only their names that would be changed.

Some thirty-eight years ago, the treatment of the poor was much the same in Sheffield as in other large manufacturing towns, neither better nor worse. Out relief, three or four shillings a week, perhaps, was granted to most of them ; and the rest, children and adults alike, were lodged in the workhouse ; and in those days the workhouse in the Goldthorp Division of Sheffield was counted fairly good. Most of the Guardians, indeed, were proud of the place rather than otherwise. They were, therefore, not only indignant but surprised when two of their fellow-Guardians, the late Mr. Ashberry and Mr. Wycliffe Wilson, at one time Member of Parliament for a Sheffield Division, started an agitation to secure the reform of the workhouse, and with it of the whole poor relief system.

The burden of the reformers' preaching was that there must be something radically wrong with the workhouse. For, while the worthless poor betook themselves there quite jauntily when evil days came, and seemed to enjoy their sojourn, decent old folk would rather live in squalor, half-starved, too, than cross the threshold of the place. ' Rather than that let's die in th' ditch,' some of them

would say. 'If all is well with the place, how is it that the children there are such a pitiable, feckless set, more like machines than boys and girls?' the agitators went about inquiring. 'How is it they turn out so badly?' And they had statistics at hand wherewith to prove that turn out badly they did, as a rule, so badly that sooner or later they drifted back to the workhouse, more often than not.

Before long some of the other Guardians joined in the clamour for reforms. Still many more went on declaring that no reforms were needed, as the state of things was already as good as good could be. Evidently their fellow-townsmen did not agree with them, however, for when it came to an election the majority of the Guardians chosen were pledged to bring about reforms. But many who now have votes then had not, it must be remembered. After much hard fighting between the two sections of the Board, it was decided in 1892 that the Reformers' two leaders should be given a free hand to frame, with the help of a committee, a scheme to bring them about.

Both Mr. Wycliffe Wilson and Mr. Ashberry were firmly convinced that, so far as the workhouse was concerned, no reforms worth making could be made until the inmates were classified. Their contention was that, so long as respectable old men and women were clubbed together with vicious old scoundrels, forced to live side by side with them, treated in all ways as they were, it would be sheer waste of time to try to better their lot. Shut up with such fellow-housemates, they must inevitably be miserable, although their disreputable companions might be comfortable and happy.

It would be sheer waste of time, too, they held, to try to better the lot of the children for whom the Guardians were responsible, so long as they were in the workhouse. For in such a place no child could be brought up as he—or she—ought to be brought up, and must be brought up, if he is to develop into a decent self-respecting member of society, able to make the best of his life, while rendering good service to his country. The mere fact of being brought up there handicaps him in the struggle for life, robs him of his chance of a fair start. The children must be removed from the workhouse, and the rest of the inmates must be classified according to their merits, so that instead of being all put together and treated alike, each one of them could be dealt with separately and treated, so far as possible, as he or she deserved to be treated.

To those two reforms they pinned all their faith; they regarded them as the *sine qua non* of all reforms; and, even before they were commissioned to do so, they had worked out to the minutest detail

their plans for bringing them about. Those plans, so far as they related to children, the Board accepted with comparatively little cavilling; and, as soon as the necessary arrangements could be made, boys and girls alike were removed from the workhouse and installed in scattered homes, where they were free from all danger of being brought in contact with anything that even smacked of pauperism, and could mix with other children on terms of equality.

It was on the classification of the adult poor question that the battle raged. For a number of the Guardians joined with some of the Poor Law Officials in declaring that to classify workhouse inmates was impossible; that it was work that never had been done, and never could be done; that it passed the wit of man, indeed, to do it. The Reformers' retort was that criminals are classified, that no sane person would propose to pen together petty pilferers and murderers and mete out to them both the same treatment; why, then, should deserving old men and women, who had worked hard all their lives, be penned up with worthless, lazy vagabonds, ex-drunkards, and their kin, and be treated as they were? The poor could be classified just as easily as criminals are classified, and classified they must be. The Anti-Reformers then raised the cry that the poor could not be classified, as to classify them would be contrary to law. The Local Government Board decided otherwise, however, when the question was referred to them; and the end of it was that a committee was appointed to do the classifying. Then things went on apace, for every member of the committee, with Mr. Wycliffe Wilson and Mr. Ashberry at their head, was heart and soul in their work. It was hard work, as they soon found, work that needed sharp eyes, keen wits, infinite patience, and plenty of common sense. None the less, within a year the inmates of the workhouse had all been carefully weighed in the balance and divided roughly into two classes, sheep and goats, *i.e.* those who deserved better treatment than they were receiving and those who did not. Then, after much more sifting and sorting, they were divided into four classes, A, B, C, D, and those in class B were subdivided into three sections.

Class A was reserved for thoroughly respectable persons over sixty years of age, who had lived in Sheffield for at least twenty years before applying for relief, and who were destitute through no fault of their own.

Class B. (1) For persons over sixty who would have been in *Class A* were it not that they had lived in Sheffield for less than twenty years, although more than twelve. (2) For persons of good

character, over sixteen, temporarily or permanently infirm through no fault of their own, who had done their best to provide against sickness, and who had lived in Sheffield for at least twelve years, before applying for relief. (3) For respectable widows with children, and deserted wives with children, who had lived in Sheffield for at least twelve years before applying for relief and who were destitute through no fault of their own.

Class C. Persons over sixteen, of good character, who had lived in Sheffield for not less than three years before applying for relief, and who could give satisfactory reasons for not being able to provide for themselves.

Class D. For all those who failed to prove that they were worthy to be in a higher class.

There were 554 persons above sixteen in the workhouse when the committee were making their investigation; and, after weighing carefully what could be said for and against each one, they decided that 53 of them belonged by right to the A class; 88 to the B, 185 to the C, and 228 to the D. They decided also that, although each of the four classes ought to be lodged separately, and kept quite apart from one another, it was only the 141 persons in A and B who deserved to be treated better than they were being treated. The 185 persons in Class C were already being treated quite as well as they deserved to be treated; while as for the 228 in Class D, they were being treated better than they deserved. According to the committee, indeed, a good half of the workhouse inmates did not deserve, and ought not to be given, anything beyond the barest necessities.

When once the classification was done the rest was comparatively easy. The committee proposed that all in Class A, excepting the infirm cases, should be removed from the workhouse as soon as cottages could be built for them to live in; and that the other three classes should be left there, each class lodged in a separate wing of the building apart from the other two classes. That was a point to which the Reformers attached great importance. The best wing was to be given to Class B, the second best to Class C, and the worst to D; and in the B wing the rations, together with the whole treatment, was to be better than in C, and in C than in D.

In January 1893 the Board accepted the committee's recommendations, and preparations were at once started for carrying them out. Thus, for the first time since the 1834 Poor Law had come into force, a trial was given to the experiment of differentiating between

the deserving poor and the undeserving, so as to secure for deserving and undeserving alike the treatment they merited.

From the first the experiment worked smoothly and well. The classifiers had done their work admirably, so far as I could judge when, a few years later, I paid my first visit to the Goldthorp workhouse. For, although I sought diligently, I could not find a man or woman who ought to have been in a higher, or lower, class than that in which he or she actually was. All who were in the A and B classes were manifestly respectable; those in A had, it was easy to see, done their fair share of hard work in their time and had, most of them, had more than their fair share of trouble. Those in Class D, on the other hand, were unmistakably undeserving. If any one of them had ever done an honest day's hard work, his face belied him cruelly. It was only those in Class C concerning whom one could feel much doubt; and that was, perhaps, because most of them were neither black nor white but speckled, feckless rather than vicious.

The organisers, too, had done their work well—wonderfully well, indeed, considering the difficulties against which they had had to contend. There was not a child in the workhouse when I went there, and the decree had gone forth that no child should ever again enter the place. I found them all either in the Reception House, where new arrivals were taken to be sifted and sorted, or in one of the scattered homes where they were sent as soon as the sifting and sorting was done. And, as a whole, they were children of whom any town might well be proud. There was no trailing of feet among them, no exchanging of furtive glances, not a trace of the pauper taint, nothing, in fact, to show that they differed in any way from the children of the average better-class working man. They lived in the same sort of house as such a man with a large family lives in, wore the same sort of clothes as his children wear, went to the same school as they did, and mixed with them on equal terms. The only difference between them and other children was that, while other children had their own mothers to take care of them, they had foster-mothers. Still, all the foster-mothers I came across there were kindly, motherly women, and the Guardians saw to it that they did their best to make their charges happy. And happy they certainly seemed; bright and intelligent too, strong and healthy, well able, in fact, to fight their own battles and make their own way in the world.

In the workhouse I found quite a different state of things from

that which I had ever before found in any such institution: the whole atmosphere of the place was different, there was so much more life and cheerful bustle, so much less monotonous gloom. In most of the workhouses I know, happiness seems to vary inversely with merit; but there it was quite otherwise. It was only among the D inmates that I came across signs of depression, discontent, and wrath; while the old people in Class A were quite cheerful, well content with their lot, and happy—as happy, at any rate, as it lay in their nature to be. That in spite of the fact that all but eight of them were still in the workhouse, although in its very best and sunniest wing. For no sooner were four cottages built, than the Local Government Board placed a veto on the building of more, as the Government were already at work trying to devise an Old Age Pension law. And in high quarters the odd notion seems to have prevailed that, when once such a law was in force, Boards of Guardians would have no decent old folk to provide for, as they would all live in comfort in their own little homes or with their relatives, on their five shillings a week each. That, although our workhouses were then—it is much the same now—crowded with old men and women who had no relatives with whom they could live; and that it passes the wit of man or woman to live alone on five shillings a week, or even ten.

Although most of the old people seemed to have a great desire to be in a cottage home, from the material point of view they could not have been better cared for there than they were in the house. They had warm, soft beds to sleep in, easy chairs to sit on, and food to eat that they could eat and enjoy, even though toothless. They were treated with great respect, too, humoured and made much of, allowed to go their own way, so far as they could safely, to see their friends and pay them visits. They were, in fact, free from all those petty restraints which, in pre-reform days, had worried them so sorely. And, what for them was of much more importance, they had folk of their own sort around them, decent folk, with whom they could talk without fear of having their tempers ruffled at every turn, their nerves set ajar, their sense of what is seemly outraged.

The Class B inmates were also well cared for, treated with consideration, and kept quite apart from the C and D inmates. They, however, must work, so far as their strength allowed, and they had much less liberty than the old people in Class A. As for the Class C inmates, they lived and worked under much the same conditions as they would have lived and worked under had no reforms

been made, excepting that such of them as were genuinely anxious to leave the house and become self-supporting were given the chance of finding work and helped to find it. It was only the Class D inmates who were really the worse off from the changes made. For them life in the workhouse was certainly less attractive, after the reforms were made, than before. Their rations, although sufficient and wholesome, were less appetising than before, and if physically able to work, work they must ; they must, in fact, if possible earn what they ate before they ate it. The result was that many who, in former days, had paid long visits to the house quite contentedly, had begun to think twice before going there and to cut their visits short, to the great advantage, of course, of the ratepayers as well as of the staff.

Of all the English workhouses that I have ever seen—and I have seen many in my time—that Sheffield workhouse was certainly the best, from every point of view, when I last saw it. But that was many years ago, and how it ranks now I cannot say ; for since then many elections have come and gone, each one bringing with it changes, of course, changes which may, perhaps, have worked havoc with the place. If they have, it is but one more proof of the disasters that result from the lack of continuity of our poor relief system. For under that system there is no continuity ; every time a new Board of Guardians is installed in office it may straightway undo all that the old Board has done. That is what hampers zealous, public-spirited Guardians so sorely, what takes the very heart out of their work ; they are always face to face with the fact that, no matter what reforms they may make one year, they may all be unmade the very next. That is especially the case now that the votes of those who receive poor relief may decide who shall, and who shall not, become Guardians, who shall, and who shall not, in fact, fix the amount of the relief they receive. So long as that state of things continues, the making of reforms must always be a heart-breaking business ; and there is not much chance of real reforms being made, or if made, their not being unmade before long.

The Sheffield scheme has its defects, of course. Under it the great prevention problem is left untackled : nothing at all is done to secure the respectable poor from drifting into pauperism, even though destitute through no fault of their own. For that defect, however, the framers of the scheme were not to blame, as the Poor Law barred the way. Nor is much done, not nearly so much as might be done, to induce the men and women in Class D to change

their ways, or to help the unskilled labourers in Class C to become skilled by having them taught a trade. Then the exclusion from Class A or B of all who had not lived in Sheffield for at least twelve years, entailed great hardship on a fair number of very respectable old persons. None the less they who framed it and carried it out had good reason to be proud of their work ; for by that work they secured for many poor children the chance of developing into decent members of society, secured, too, for many worthy men and women in the workhouse through no fault of their own, the chance of living in peace quite apart from the vicious and degraded, and thus saved them from great misery. And, while bettering the lot of the deserving poor, they taught a very useful lesson to the undeserving, to those whose aim in life is to live on the earnings of others. That they did by bringing about a quite wonderful change in a large workhouse by transforming it, in fact, from a place where the worse a man was the better he fared, into one in which it was only the deserving who lived in comfort. And that great change was brought about, it must be noted, by a little band of Poor Law Guardians—in a great measure, indeed, by two Guardians—who brought it about not by spending money lavishly, but by taking infinite trouble, i.e. by classifying the inmates and treating them according to their merits. And what they did could be done, without any great expense either, by any Board of Guardians that choose to take the trouble.

Under the new workhouse régime the deserving inmates, it is true, cost more—not very much more—than they had cost under the old régime, just as the children in their cottage homes cost more than they had cost in the workhouse ; but, on the other hand, the undeserving inmates cost considerably less. And in the average workhouse the undeserving always far outnumber the deserving. Moreover, it was not because more money was spent on them that I found those Class A old men and women so much brighter and happier than I had ever before found workhouse inmates, but because they were no longer penned up with the undeserving who, in former days, had made their lives a burden to them. Of that I had never a doubt after going among them and listening to what they told me. No matter what had been done for their material comfort, their lot in life would never have been really bettered had they not been classified and lodged in quarters reserved exclusively for the respectable. And the classifying of them cost the ratepayers nothing, although it entailed on the Guardians much hard work. Thus the Sheffield reformers would have rendered good service, not

only to the deserving poor but to ratepayers, had they done nothing but prove to the satisfaction of all whose eyes are not holden that, even in a large and overcrowded workhouse, the inmates can be classified if Boards of Guardians will take the trouble to classify them. Not only that, however, did the reformers prove, but much besides : for one thing, that it would be sheer waste to spend money on building old-age homes, sorely as they are needed, unless the inmates were classified and the deserving were kept entirely apart from the undeserving ; for another, that the welfare of the poor depends not on the Poor Law but on those who administer it.

The Sheffield experiment was, from the first, watched carefully by all who were interested in Poor Law administration, and, before long, it was hailed as a great success. Mr. T. W. Russell, when President of the Local Government Board, held up the Sheffield Board of Guardians as a model for other Boards to copy ; and his successor, Mr. Chaplin, went even further : for by issuing in 1900 his circular on the Treatment of the Aged and Deserving Poor, he did all that he could do without the help of Parliament to induce them to copy it. Mr. Russell's exhortation fell on deaf ears, however, while as for Mr. Chaplin's circular, the great majority of Guardians never read it. Quite a fair number of them, indeed, assured me, when later I made inquiries on the subject, that they had never even heard of it. I mentioned that fact to the late Lord Long, when President of the Local Government Board ; telling him at the same time that I had just visited a workhouse which, although condemned as unfit for human habitation by an official inspector, already some twenty years before, was still standing and crowded. He was not in the least surprised ; for, as he remarked, it was quite useless for his Board to try to induce Guardians to read anything they did not wish to read, or to do anything they did not wish to do. All that it could do was to prevent their spending money ; and even that was a long and troublesome business.

As it was then, so is it now, even though the Local Government Board has become the Ministry of Health and the Defaulting Guardians' Act is in force. For more than a generation their higher authority has been exhorting Poor Law Guardians to close the doors of their workhouse against children, and to classify the inmates according to merit. Yet, even now, in spite of the fact that the Widows' and Orphans' Pensions Act is in force, there are thousands of children still living in workhouses ; and, in the overwhelming majority of such institutions, no attempt has ever been made to classify even the aged poor. They are still all clubbed

together, deserving and undeserving alike, all treated alike. Quite recently I found, in a workhouse, some very respectable old ladies sitting side by side with two old harridans, who for many years had plied the most disreputable of callings, and who probably regaled each other from time to time by relating their past experiences! In that workhouse the state of things, so far as the welfare of the aged deserving poor is concerned, is practically the same as it was in that Sheffield workhouse when the agitation for reforms was started. That in spite of the fact that, since then, the cost of poor relief has gone up by leaps and bounds, from some £3,000,000 then to more than £40,000,000 now, and that many laws for the benefit of the working classes have come into force, each one entailing great expense.

As it is now, so will it be in the days to come, whether the Government's Poor Law Reform Bill passes or not, unless, indeed, we take to heart the lesson the Sheffield experiment teaches and wake up to the fact that, much as our Poor Law may need bettering, they who administer it need bettering even more; and that unless they can be bettered, it is useless to better the law. For, as that experiment proves clearly, the success or failure of a poor relief system depends not on the law but on its administrators. Could means be devised of securing, for every town and district, Poor Law Guardians of the same sort as those Sheffield Guardians, men and women heart and soul in their work, and capable of doing it skilfully, neither the poor nor the ratepayers would have cause of complaint, even though the Poor Law were left as it is. To secure such Guardians would, however, be a difficult task—an impossible task, indeed—so long as the recipients of relief have a voice in deciding who shall, and who shall not, be Guardians. That being the case, the only thing to be done—or so it seems to me—is to do what has already been done in other countries: either make a clean sweep of our honorary amateur Poor Law administrators and instal paid trained officials in their place, or provide them with a trained official as their chairman. That in itself would not be enough, however, unless at the same time they were also provided with a higher authority able to direct and control them in fact as well as in theory; and thus secure continuity as well as uniformity in the treatment of the ratepayers as well as of the poor. England is the only country in Europe, barring one, where amateur Poor Law administrators are left without trained officials to guide and direct them in their work; the only country where they are allowed to raise the money they spend by levying a Poor Rate.

*ADVENTURES IN THE INDIAN JUNGLES:
UNDER CANVAS WITH A RAJA.*

NETTING DEER. A CAMP DISASTER. SHOOTING WILD DUCK.

BY GEORGE HOGAN KNOWLES.

[The author and his brothers are well-known big-game hunters in India.]

IN the olden days, in the great stretch of primeval forest at the foot of the Himalayan mountains—particularly in the ‘Sewalik’ range of hills and east of beautiful Dehra Dun, all along the Naini-Tal Terai, as far as the Lakhimpur or Kheri district—the great Emperors of Delhi used to set forth in the glorious winter months on hunting and shooting expeditions. In addition to tiger shooting and elephant ‘kheddass’—the ‘pit’ system of catching wild elephants being frequently in favour in those great historic days in Upper India—a great sport indulged in was the netting of the beautiful spotted deer or ‘cheetal,’ which overran the higher glens and the Terai Forests below the hills in countless numbers. In that *ancien régime* tradition has it that the display of splendour, when pleasure was the direct object of an expedition, was unsurpassed by any other kind of pageant; such as spectacular processions, royal tours for administrative purposes, and the necessity of display consequent upon warfaring campaigns; all of which, in ancient Eastern monarchies, had the sole object of impressing the people—friends and foes alike.

All the chief nobles from every province of the vast ‘Moghul’ Kingdom would receive a royal summons, on pain of incurring the great Emperor’s displeasure—which might mean anything—should submissive and punctual obedience, whatever the sacrifice, not be considered a compulsory obligation. From many hundreds of miles great and small chieftains, and Rajas and Zamindars of every status and degree, would travel by day and by night, each with his retinue of soldiers and ‘shikaries,’ to reach the great capital by the appointed time. The Ministers of State would assemble all these ‘blue blood’ of the land in a vast encampment until the arrival of the great day when, with the vast splendour

of the Emperor and his personnel, all would move out from Delhi in an overwhelming and glittering procession of many miles in length.

Unfortunate would be the poor cultivators through whose villages and lands the royal hunting and shooting expedition would mark out its course of travel for the selected locality in the jungles. Not only had the Emperor and his Ministers, and all the great and small nobles of the kingdom with their innumerable servants and followers to be fed and kept as the mighty host moved along by easy marches every day, but the almost countless animals, elephants, horses, and cattle had to be maintained. The crops for miles and miles around, within the circumference of each length of march, would be devastated and laid waste to a blade of grass. Durbars would be held and 'nazaars' (gifts—in money, in kind, in goods) taken, and the small farmers and the cultivators would be reduced to beggary and starvation by the conclusion of a day's march.

What a different aspect is presented in the India of to-day, with its great protection and prosperity under the benign and mighty rule of the gallant British people! In British India there is no poor cultivator residing in the most distant and the wildest corner of the Empire who has not felt the blessings of the great protecting arm of the Englishman—be it official or non-official—and who does not live in complete confidence as to the safety of his life and property. On the occasion of the King Emperor's Durbar in Delhi in 1911, before the Great War, the following few lines were addressed :

' Emperor, whose pow'r this region vast commands,
No race more proud of King than ours of Thee !
Beneath whose flag unconquered swells each sea,
And roll the roaring oceans round thy lands.

' By town or desert, 'neath the sunset's rays,
Where e'er the humble ploughman rests from toil,
He knows no foe can raid, no plunderer spoil
His full ripe fields, the gladness of his days.

' In grass-thatched hut he fears no lawless crime,
Save where the tiger roars ere night's begun—
Where far and wide thy grandest regions run ;
Ind's mighty Forests saved for countless time !

'Of rich or poor, upon each racial brow,
No mists can veil the sunshine of the free ;
From dreaded "Thug" secure beneath the tree
The traveller finds a welcome solace now !'

Even to this day vast herds of the graceful 'cheetal' (spotted deer) abound in most of our sub-Himalayan forests protected by Government. Dangerous as it is, the netting of deer is a most fascinating sport, provided the butchery indulged in—when the object is not to take the animals alive—were only left out of the programme.

My brother Douglas K. and I were once fortunate enough to be eye-witnesses to the sport. Some years ago, in a district in Oudh, now the United Provinces, Douglas K. and I were invited to a shoot by a big Indian Zamindar friend (a large landowner) who had extensive estates, and possessed a wide extent of sal forest stretching far north to the foot of the Himalayas. We were joined by an officer in the Opium Department, who, along with his wife, had also been asked to the shoot. The lady was as keen as we men were on small- and big-game shooting, and was a capital shot with both the gun and the rifle. This Zamindar, or Raja as he was called locally by his people, was very anxious to show us this ancient sport of netting deer, and we gladly accepted his kind invitation.

We encamped the first night of our arrival in a large grove of wide-spreading mango trees, quite near the Raja's residence. It was a picturesque spot—rolling, undulating country, covered with the young, tender Indian wheat and gram crops all in dark green, stretched on all sides of the grove of trees ; and, with the field hedges lining some parts of the scenery, one could easily imagine oneself in delightful Kent again—between Canterbury and Margate—looking out on to the young English wheat, barley and oats at the end of spring. It was the month of December, some ten days before Christmas, and the weather was cold and bracing with a nice crisp feeling in the air. Here and there small hamlets nestled over the distant view, among clumps of bamboo and graceful plantain trees, which, as soon as the eye rested on them, gave one a wrench, and brought one rudely to realise that this was the East, and that beautiful England lay thousands of miles away, across many seas. It is strange that, even in the best climates of Eastern countries, however green the grass may be, it is never the same beautiful emerald shade as the Englishman is accustomed to see in his own

country. How one misses that delightful green, even with the variety of coloration over a distant view when harvest time is approaching, and the ancient, sombre-looking windmill stands out on some interesting brow of rolling English scenery. Now and again a feeble reminder brings a lump to the throat, and makes one feel sad and disconsolate !

We helped the Raja, on the first night of arrival, in his arrangements for the big hunt the following day. The programme was that all the Raja's elephants—some three or four—should be sent on to a camping ground about two miles away, where we were to spend the next two or three days. We were to leave early the next morning on horseback, riding the short distance into the next camp, where the elephants would be waiting to carry us another three miles to a spot in the heart of the jungles.

It was a delightfully cold morning the following day, when we set out after 'chota-hazaree' (morning tea and warm toast) on our fidgety horses. We mustered a cavalcade of six altogether, including the Opium Officer's wife, and enjoyed a bracing, thrilling gallop for the first few furlongs before pulling up rein for a walk. A soft sun, like a crisp sheen of gold, lay over the green fields to the right and left of the white, dusty road ahead, and began to awake the sleepy bullock-cart drivers curled up on top of bags of merchandise, or lying inside their carts on top of thick paddings of straw, covered from head to foot in rough black blankets and dirty thick white cloth. Strings and strings of creaking bullock carts are passed along the district roads of an early morning, the bullocks following behind each cart drawing their loads, and all depending upon the acuteness of the pair of bullocks of the leading cart. They follow one another behind in a long line—sometimes half a mile long—with their drivers and sometimes the merchant himself, or other occupants, in the unconsciousness of deep slumber. Very often, through tiger-infested jungles, they travel all night in this manner, quite unconcerned as to what may happen, with complete confidence in the intelligence of their bullocks or buffaloes.

We arrived in camp about 9 o'clock, after dallying on the way, and mounted our elephants for the remainder of the journey. The Raja was in high spirits as he took us along, explaining the method of netting deer, until we reached a clearing in the jungle where a number of tame 'cheetal' stags—which were fine animals—were awaiting us, in charge of their keepers. We now took to our horses that had been brought up behind.

'I am now going to introduce you to a grand old India hunt,' said the Raja, 'the sport of our ancient kings! These are my trained champions,' he said, as he pointed to the gram-fed stags, some of which had beautiful branching antlers measuring 35 and 36 inches.

We suddenly heard village drums and the shouting of men, and were informed by the Raja that the noise came from a band of beaters who were driving a herd of spotted deer into an open glen close by us. A strip of forest intervened, so that we could see nothing; but the Raja and his men presently led us out to an open spot, and concealed us, horses and all, in a thick clump of shrubbery, from which we could see down the open glen without being seen by the wild animals. We dismounted here, holding our horses firmly in order to keep them quiet.

Very soon a big herd of 'cheetal' emerged into the open, the members of which stood about scattered, some grazing, and some looking steadfastly in our direction. The stags, most of whom looked warlike and powerful, came loitering up behind, as if they ignored danger of any kind. The tame champions, who were brought into a position facing the wild herd, were now let loose, and they immediately advanced at a proud trot, shaking their beautiful antlers.

The challenge was taken up at once by the watchful guardians of the wild herd, who came forward with a similar threat to meet the Raja's stags. The wild ones hesitated a moment, however, as if puzzled whether the strangers came as friends or foes. But it was not long before the matter was decided, and the parties quickly attacked each other—the wild stags bounding up fiercely, with their heads lowered when within a short distance of their adversaries.

Their antlers soon met in a resounding crash, and all interest was at once centred on the fierce contest that waged between the tame and the wild creatures. The former, as formidably built as the free-rovers, appeared to be specially trained to stand on the defensive; which they did with admirable skill. The object of this, as the Raja whispered to us, was to reduce the wild stags to a state of fatigue by inciting them to constant attacks—in order that, when the time came to approach the combatants, the danger to the 'shikaries' might be lessened. It was not a case of sham warfare, but a fierce struggle of the most desperate nature.

The moment soon arrived for the 'shikaries' to advance; and,

as a number of them on foot made their appearance, hugging the edge of the forest, with long gleaming knives in their hands, and strongly made nets of thin rope, the hinds and young prickets of the herd—and a few larger stags that were not participating in the battle—instantly took flight. The big wild stags were too fiercely engaged to trouble about the danger threatening them from behind. To steal round to the rear of the combatants, getting between them and the forest—in order to cut off the retreat of the wild animals—was the desired objective of the plan. The hunters succeeded in their efforts; and the spectacle that now lay before us was thrilling and blood curdling, as the sinister-looking 'shikaries' stole up cautiously from behind, with heads and backs bent low, moving softly, step by step, over the bright green sward.

The clever manœuvring of the trained stags, to keep the wild ones so engaged that their hindquarters would be in a direct line with the advance of the 'shikaries'—to prevent the slightest chance of a glimpse behind—was an exhibition of such wonderful intelligence on the part of those animals that it seemed quite incredible; we could hardly believe the indisputable evidence of our own eyes.

Altogether there were six wild stags engaged with six tame ones; and twelve 'shikaries' advanced in couples, in open order on the same alignment, the deploying interval—to use military terms—between each unit of two men being twenty to thirty paces.

We saw the tame stags pushing and butting to the right and left; and we were astonished when the Raja told us that his trained champions were not only arranging to cover the men, but were adjusting approximately the same uniform distance, laterally, between themselves with their contesting opponents as the lateral space between each advancing unit of 'shikaries.' He told us that the tame stags, the moment they came into contact with the wild ones, noted the lateral distances of the advancing men, and immediately put the battle line into the same order. He said that their sense of exact distances was baffling to human understanding, and he remarked here that the antelope and the goat had been observed to possess the same mathematical sense. We saw, to our utter surprise, how skilfully the tame stags were treating us to an example of this wonderful sense, and were, in fact, manœuvring in unison with the men, at every stage in the attack, to suit the whole plan of battle. The right flank of advancing men had nets, and the left flank knives. In each unit of two men, one man—who

in every case was a powerfully built athlete—was empty handed, his duty being to catch the net on the other side of the stag, when thrown, and to pin it down; and, in case of mishap, to seize the horns of the wild stag in order to save his companion, with the net or knife, as the case may be. The trained athletes constantly practise with the tame stags, fighting with them, and seizing their antlers of a sudden, at which they become wonderfully dexterous.

The 'shikaries' were now close behind the desperately engaged wild stags; and those with knives on the left flank, with a sudden swift stroke with their weapons, hamstringing their brave victims, and hurried away. Three of these poor animals, so dealt with simultaneously, unable now to withstand the pressure brought to bear by the unhurt champion deer, fell helplessly to the ground.

Meanwhile, among the right flank of men who were net-bearers, two succeeded in throwing their nets with great skill, and a couple of fine stags were held and pinned down, the animals being thrown to the ground by the crafty movements of the men: but in this flank, one unit of men narrowly escaped being gored to death. They were suddenly attacked by the only stag that was able to get away. As the net-bearer was on the point of throwing his net, one of the brow horns of the wild stag broke off, and the tame one, who at that moment was pressing hard against his opponent's horns—the two antlers being interlocked—was impelled forward with great force, and fell on his knees behind the wild one. The infuriated wild stag switched round instantly, and coming face to face with the two 'shikaries,' who were completely taken by surprise, charged home with a loud snort! Being thoroughly experienced at the game, the two men flung themselves down, and lay face downwards, flat on the ground. The stag's sharp horns, however, ripped the back of the thighs of the net-bearer, causing great gashes down both his legs. But for our timely aid, as we mounted at the Raja's request and came galloping up, the wild stag would undoubtedly have killed one of these men.

The tame stags were then called off. The evidence of the severe fighting was plainly marked on their gored chests, from which blood was flowing freely; but, capering about joyously, and tossing their heads, little was the concern they appeared to show for their wounds. Instead of allowing the 'shikaries' to kill the poor hamstrung stags in their usual fashion, we had them shot; and the Raja himself admitted that he did not like, and discouraged, this most unsportsmanlike part of the hunt. It was

a wonderful sight to see the captured stags being carried away, their limbs and heads being closely folded up in the nets. They were placed in bullock carts and driven off to the Raja's residence, where they were to begin their training with the tame stags. The Raja told us that, once they became accustomed to their new surroundings, it took but a few weeks to train them, as they were most intelligent creatures.

The following morning our good sporting host, the Raja, announced that he had made arrangements for a duck shoot, and that we were to proceed after breakfast, about 10 o'clock, to a large swamp some two or three miles from camp, in the opposite direction to the belt of sal forest where the spotted deer were netted.

At the appointed time of starting, we heard the tom-tom of village drums accompanied by a great shouting of men, which came from the direction of the Raja's residence two miles away: our servants duly informed us that the Raja was about to appear in our camp, in a motor-car which he had lately purchased in the city of Lucknow, and of which he was very proud—the 'Howah Garry,' or the mysterious four-wheeled vehicle which was drawn by the demons of the wind (in place of horses) who roared in anger when the wheels refused to move forward, being worshipped in awe and respect by all the people, who had never in all their weirdest folk-lore heard of such a thing!

A vast cloud of dust approached, heaved along with the din of tom-toms, shouting and the fanfare of trumpets, sufficient to rend any cloud but an Indian dust storm. The elephants that had arrived earlier in camp began to get distinctly restless; and a remarkable apology for a trapper—which in a more civilised stable would have served the purpose of an excellent harness rack—that was tied on with odd ropes to the suspicious looking shafts of a rickety two-wheel trap, cocked one ear forward, and with the other one lying back savagely denounced the whole cause of the dust and din with a fierce scream and a plunge in the air, which released him instantaneously from his creaking and shaky burden behind. He careered round the camp, with his groom lying stretched on the ground, which upset our own saddle-horses. Two of the latter broke loose, and the three horses dashed about madly, while the dust of the approaching tumult began to encircle our encampment. This was all too much for the three panicky elephants. They shook their heads and trumpeted, while their 'mahouts' swore hard at them—hurling abuse at their prehistoric ancestors.

But it was no use! The demons of the air apparently were having a day out! The elephants lifted their tails and bolted from the uncanny camp, making a bee line through our wide-spreading tents. The servants and camp followers ran in terror of being trampled, and we had to discard polished manners, that meant awaiting the arrival of our good host (in whatever way he chose to usher himself in) with all due ceremony. We were in roars of laughter until the elephants stampeded!

'Bolt!' suggested Douglas, 'by the Marrowbone Stage!' And we did. Shank's mare was not in it! The mango-trees were thick enough, thank goodness, to hide behind. The Opium Officer's sporting wife flew, and we followed after her. From our various positions behind trees—while the wild duck were waiting to be shot two and a half miles away, we beheld the devastation. The dust and the tumultuous crowd with the Raja arrived just in time to add to the confusion. The elephants literally tore up the camp. The tent ropes and pegs over which they trampled were burst and flung into the air, and down came the tent poles with resounding crashes. The dust got worse and filled the whole mango grove like a fog. Screams and yells were heard all over the place, and we thought at least a dozen people had been killed. Everybody seemed to be running madly away from the sudden demon-invested encampment. Never had Douglas K. and I experienced such a pandemonium! With the final disappearance of the elephants and horses, the tom-toms and the crowd, the heavy dust began to lift, and when we stalked out of our hiding places we beheld the poor Raja sitting alone in a dilapidated old 'Tin Lizzie'—which was probably the first car of the first model ever turned out—with three burst tyres out of the four. He was looking about him terrified, staring all round the encampment, with two of the tents levelled to the ground, broken furniture and crockery, and pots and pans lying scattered all over the place.

'Good morning, Raja Sahib,' said Douglas.

'What has happened?' gasped the Raja.

'The elephants and horses took fright,' explained Douglas.

'Perhaps they've never seen your motor-car before.'

The Raja breathed more easily and joined in the laughter, after which the cause of the whole trouble was disclosed.

The car had never moved an inch by itself since the day he had paid rupees 1000 for it. He lived in hopes of its going some day—so did his people! The noisy crowd, with the drums and

the flourish of trumpets etc. etc., was only the attempt of the people to awaken the demon sleeping in the bonnet of the car. A great crowd would always collect willingly to push the car (and so help the demon) whenever the Raja wished to use it ; and the disaster in camp was only due to the car being pushed from the Raja's residence to our tents.

'You see,' said the Raja, 'I was most anxious to do you the honour of taking you along to the "duck jheel" (swamp) in my car. The crowd would have been delighted to push us along the two or three miles and to see the duck falling to your guns all over the place. Come along,' he said ; 'if the engine won't go, we have no lack of two-legged ones and will soon arrive at the shooting ground.'

He would not hear of us using the elephants or riding. It would take time, he told us, to calm the panic-stricken elephants and catch the horses ; and he straightway despatched two men to reason with the crowd and to bring them back.

In small groups of twos and threes the men returned, and soon collected again in a vast crowd, when the Raja assured them that 'the demon' was calmed down and they need have no fear.

There was no petrol in the tank, but the Raja said that there never had been any, and assured us that that little matter, along with the burst tyres, was of no consequence in the least.

So we started—and it was a start !—after leaving instructions to our servants to rig up the camp again as best they could, and to send out another lunch basket as soon as they could get ready some more roast fowls and hard-boiled eggs. The nice lunch basket prepared by the Opium Officer's wife had been left on the ground outside, and had been trampled upon by one of the mad elephants.

In order not to disturb the duck on our approach, every effort was made to prevent the crowd from shouting and yelling, as they pushed us along. We were drowned in white dust and had to stop every few hundred yards and scamper out of the car in order to breathe. The Raja appeared to be quite accustomed to it, and seemed to be swallowing enough dust to go a few weeks without any meals.

But all this inconvenience and the dreadful shaking was instantly forgotten when a flight of pin-tail, like a sudden gust of wind, swept over our heads and was gone. As we came into view of a lower reach of land we beheld a great mass of high swamp

grass and rushes, and flight upon flight of dark triangular lines rising and falling over the tops of the green and yellow stretches. And suddenly, from far as it seemed, came a thrilling chorus of quack, quack, borne on the morning breeze—clashing in every variety of harsh and penetrating guttural of the wild duck's cry. A flight of the greylag geese arose and circled round the centre of the 'jheel,' settling again.

We stopped at a small hamlet almost hidden by lofty bamboo clumps, drooping gracefully over the thatched mud huts, and began hastily to gather up our guns and cartridge bags from the motley crowd; quickly we marched off on foot to a bend in the huge swamp, well screened, where about a dozen or more small 'dug-outs' (log boats) were awaiting us. The small log boat is punted by one man only, with a long pole, while the shooter sits in the centre of the boat with his bag of cartridges in front of him, and balances himself carefully. There is room for two only in the small dug-out.

The Raja instructed the boatmen as to the position of each gun, and warned us all, at the last moment, that the swamp was full of snub-nosed crocodile, waiting for anyone who should be so unfortunate as to fall into the water, and that we must guard very carefully against being capsized. This rather took the gilt off the gingerbread, as it takes very little to capsize the tiny 'dug-out,' and one might easily make a disastrous mistake in the excitement of shooting, with the sudden swinging round that is necessary for fast-moving duck. One's life seemed to be entirely at the mercy of the puny little dark half-naked figure standing at the bow of the boat, balancing himself lithely with the long pole in his hands. But these boatmen are expert and seldom make a mistake.

The guns were fairly well scattered over the swamp, as far apart as possible, hidden in the long grass and reeds. Douglas K. and I were the only shooters using the 20-bore gun, and we challenged the 12-bore. We had all along obtained wonderful results with the 20-bore, and had beaten many of the 12-bore records at every kind of small game, both in killing power—for on the average the losses with a 20-bore gun are much less—and in range. I have known many fine shots in India, and experienced sportsmen, who have given up the bigger bore for the smaller one, and have even used the 28-bore most effectively for game birds other than snipe and quail. One can get very accurate with a 20-bore gun, and the concentration is apparently more effective for long shots.

Skirting the swamp on nearly all sides, the Raja had placed 'shikaries' with muzzle-loading guns to keep the duck on the move, and after an hour's wait in our hiding places some far-away shots suddenly rang out.

From all round the far-reaching swamp a mighty quacking and rumbling is simultaneously heard, followed almost immediately by successive crashes of moving and settling birds. Another few shots ring out and then thunder rolls by as the rising of millions of wild duck at one and the same time merges into a long drawn roar which can be easily heard a mile away.

And what a sight now greets the eye! The sun is almost as effectually obliterated as if a vast cloud had suddenly spread over the sky. Flights of mallard, pin-tail, gadwall, and the red-headed pochards whirr and dash over our heads, flying first low over the reed tops until toll is taken. And then, seeming to come from every point of the compass, flight upon flight at various heights swish by. Bewildered birds in small flights, and in threes and fours dive past and dodge the guns at a terrific pace. The white-eyed duck and the spotted bill appear to be the boldest, and constantly pass low over the guns. Fusillade upon fusillade split the air, and duck and teal come hurling down with a loud splash in the water. The spare boats are working hard, some in the high reeds and others chasing wounded birds out in the open water, and all seem to be getting piled up with a bag. My gun gets too hot to hold, and I have recourse to a khaki-coloured handkerchief. After a while we call to each other to cease fire as the birds are fighting away. This is done at intervals to allow the duck to return. We shoot on till late in the afternoon, when the Raja calls out that it is time to give over and return to camp. We direct the boatmen; and now comes the excitement of greeting each other on high and dry land to compare notes and our various bags. As the loaded boats arrive, they are emptied by dozens of men who come up from the crowd, and each gun lines out his duck and counts his bag.

There were over two hundred true duck between seven guns, Douglas K. having got the biggest bag of seventy duck. I was fortunate to be second with over fifty, and the Opium Officer's wife third with thirty-eight. The Raja was greatly surprised at the lady's shooting, and was rapt in admiration of her sterling qualities as a sportsman. By the time we left him he was prepared to reconstruct his ancient inherited beliefs in regard to womankind

in general and their capabilities. Of the miscellaneous bag there were several grebe, both the lesser and the greater, and many shovellers, which are quite good eating early in the season, when there is plenty of water and weed feeding along the edges of the 'jheel.' There were two swamp partridges—one shot by Douglas, and the other by the Raja—five snipe and one quail. It was rare to find the swamp partridges right out in such deep water; and rarer still to find a quail in among the duck, so far from the banks of the big 'jheel.' But for a few mallard, gadwall, pin-tail, white-eye duck, the partridges, snipe and quail, the bag was divided among the village people who had helped to push the car. We returned to camp on elephants, and as we had had no lunch we were glad to sit down to a high tea late in the evening which necessitated missing dinner.

THE BIRD-BATH.

MISS ANNA loved to hear the chimes of the cathedral clock. When her father was a canon at the cathedral the chimes had become a part of her life, had come to mean all the decency and order that are known to a canon's family in an old cathedral town in the west of England.

For this reason Miss Anna, when the time came for her to choose her own life, sought a small house within hearing of the chimes. With economy she could just afford this house and her many charities. She kept one maid who was usually a charity too, for either the girl was an orphan in training or a youthful sinner being reformed. At the time of these happenings in Miss Anna's life her maid was merely delicate and in need of care and personal interest.

Miss Anna's life was spent in a round of dull duties. At least to her relatives these duties were counted dull. They belonged, as it were, to the tidying up of life. For if some feast others must tidy up afterwards. Miss Anna had always been of those who prepare the feast or wash up after it. She had never been a guest.

'The worst of Aunt Anna's life is,' said one of her nieces, 'that nothing ever happens. It's so utterly negative—she's just good.'

'Well, probably she enjoys that,' said another.

'No, she's good because she ought to be, but I don't think she even enjoys it; it's just duty, and she does it.'

However, it is probable that Miss Anna enjoyed her complete independence. She gave much but she asked for nothing. She required neither care nor affection from her relations. She was never ill, so she never needed nursing. She gave presents but she neither expected nor received them. But if anyone was ill or in trouble Miss Anna appeared at the door, quiet and competent, usually clothed in navy blue with a felt hat and a fur necklet. And no one minded her knowing their poverty or their folly. Her friends, and she had many friends, said 'Anna does not matter.'

So much for a general survey of her life. On this particular day Miss Anna had visited an orphanage with a parcel of pinafores made by herself; she had read aloud for an hour at a blind institute, she had attended Evensong at the cathedral and paid two or three visits to sick or unpleasant persons whom the more fortunate did not care to visit.

Now she felt wholesomely tired, and the pleasures of rest and supper were genuine pleasures.

She liked her lamp-lit room with its Arundel prints and old furniture and china, her table with its white cloth and bowl of strong-smelling chrysanthemums. The fire, too, was bright and cheerful. She looked forward to her moderately easy chair and that excellent biography from the library. As she finished her last slice of toast she foresaw a pleasant evening. She was much too tired to do her charity sewing or account keeping. She would read the life of the pious, useful and pleasantly aristocratic lady whose history lay on her table.

But first she must ring and have the table cleared.

The bell summoned a slight, fair girl from the kitchen. Her name was Jessie, and rather to Miss Anna's relief it was her bronchial tubes rather than her morals which needed most care. Jessie carefully filled her tray, put it on a side table, and then swept the crumbs into a crumb-tray.

'It's dreadful to think of that man being hung to-morrow, Miss, isn't it?' she said, pausing at the far side of the table.

Miss Anna looked up through her horn-rimmed glasses.

'What man is being hanged, Jessie? You startle me when you jerk out things like that.'

'But, Miss Anna, I thought you'd know. Why everyone does. You've surely heard of Giles Greenway, the bungalow murderer?'

'Perhaps I have, Jessie, but I never read murder cases. They're so horrid and vulgar. I've just seen the headlines, I suppose. I so wish you'd read nice things or books, and not fill your mind with the horrors in the *Evening News*.'

'Well, this is different, Miss; he belongs here. He used to be Art master, the paper says, and he and his wife were living out at Pole-Wyngate. The 'buses run there now. There was a picture of the place in the paper lately and his face in a ring inside; quite handsome he was, too. His poor wife—I pity her. He's a gentleman, too; it does seem sad.'

'That only makes it worse,' retorted Miss Anna. 'He should have known better.'

'And putting her in the cupboard under the stairs among the garden tools and going off——'

Jessie had finished the crumbs. She was slowly folding the embroidered cloth.

'Whom did he put there?'

Miss Anna asked the question against her will and rather severely.

'The body, Miss. He strangled her and then shoved it in among the spades.'

'And who was the unfortunate woman?'

Jessie made no excuse now for lingering. She stood by the table, conscious of her agreeably gruesome office as tale-bearer to the old and innocent.

'She wasn't a good woman either, Miss; her name was Mrs. Denzille. She'd left her husband, too. She used to recite a lot, they say; just the sort men like—red hair and big eyes, and a lot of teeth.'

Miss Anna seized upon the moral, for the instructions of orphans and penitents had become a habit.

'You see, Jessie, one sin leads to another. Probably at first it was just a little flirtation and a wish on that poor woman's part to shine and fascinate, and now she is dead . . . and he will be soon.'

The girl, a little awed, assented. She pulled the curtains together more closely.

'Still it's awful, him waiting there in the gaol and we here so comfortable. And the hangman is in the town now making things ready. The milkman's brother saw him at the station with his bag—they say he looks quite an ordinary man, too.'

Miss Anna expressed disgust with indrawn breath.

'Jessie! Why do you dwell on it all? It's so bad for you. If you ever have gas or ether you'll begin dreaming of it. It's all very dreadful. But we don't know these people, and beyond a prayer for them we can do nothing. I do thank God that neither my dear parents nor I have ever known that sort of person. And I don't want to.'

Jessie had moved slowly to the door. She was reflecting on the curious elderly innocence of her mistress. Miss Anna—everyone called her Miss Anna or Aunt Anna at this period—seemed to live in a little isolation camp hedged in by the Prayer Book and various refined periodicals. Jessie, who knew a little of a world where passion plays its part, looked at her with the pity so often bestowed by maid upon mistress.

'You wouldn't like the *Evening News*, Miss?'

'Indeed I wouldn't, Jessie. Do burn it and let us think of something nice. I hate this dwelling upon horrors.'

'Oh, I don't read the Sunday papers, ma'am; they're the worst.'

It's just his being a gentleman of these parts and the gaol not so far away from us I keep thinking of him.'

'Well, we can't do him any good except by prayer, Jessie.'

The girl lingered, her nerves a little shaken.

'They say they often sleep well before they're hung.'

Miss Anna picked up her biography and opened it resolutely. She feigned not to hear and the door closed softly.

It was strangely hard to read about the virtuous and aristocratic lady. Miss Anna found herself gazing at the fire instead of at her book, and instead of the fire she saw an imaginary prison. She seemed to walk down dark paved corridors, and a voice said 'This is the condemned cell.'

She forced herself to read again; then the voice in her mind asked, 'Do they have two warders on duty with them or one? Do the warders ever go to sleep? How *do* they all pass the time? Will they reprieve him? He doesn't deserve it. Is he thinking of his poor wife?'

Miss Anna was so used to tidying up after other people, so earnest in care for illegitimate orphans and youthful sinners. Metaphorically she walked abroad with a dustpan and brush to sweep up after the irregular gaieties of the pagan and careless. But here was a case in which she could do nothing. This was not for her tidying. Hangman and sheriff and chaplain, it would be their business. And the poor wife at Pole-Wyngate? Heaven help her. Miss Anna had no experience of murder and adultery in well-bred circles, for here she pulled her neat tweed skirt aside.

At ten o'clock Jessie came in and sat down on a chair discreetly near the door. Old Tony, the Aberdeen terrier, at this point, by the fixed convention of doghood, rose from the hearth-rug and waddled to her side. He punctuated the reading of prayers by grunts or by noisy scratchings when it was Jessie's duty to poke him in the ribs.

This evening Miss Anna read the De Profundis psalm with feeling, and she prayed for all prisoners and captives. After some fluttering of leaves she passed to the service for the Burial of the Dead, and read with hesitation and alteration a prayer of commendation. Jessie rose from her knees, her face was awed.

'It's the poor wife I'm thinking of, too,' she said; 'the disgrace an' all, and she a real lady. My cousin's aunt has charred there.

They call the house "Willows." She knows it well. It's nearly the last in the village.'

'Really? Well go to bed, Jessie, and take Tony. You might give him his medicine in the morning. Good-night—and don't dwell on this affair. It's no concern of ours.'

'No, Miss. Good-night, Miss.'

It was a habit of Miss Anna to say her prayers by her sitting-room fire, for her charities entailed economy, an economy exercised rigorously in her comforts. A bedroom fire was unknown to her, so she said her prayers and read her devotional books in her sitting-room. Another of her habits was to turn the lamp low when she was praying. Whether guardian angels are troubled by a sense of humour we do not know, but a kind angel might have smiled at Miss Anna huddled with her head in an easy chair, her lips murmuring. She had begun with her usual form, the 'Our Father,' and then her intercessions for her dear relations and friends, god-children, for all in distress of mind or body . . . 'God help him . . . God help him . . . God help him.'

She found she was saying the words again and again. No other thought would come. Her mind was fixed on an imaginary cell and upon an imaginary being, sleepless or sleeping, she could not say. But his awful need was obsessing her. She, who refused to read of murders, was giving the whole intensity of her being to prayer for one murderer. She was kneeling at one side of the fire by the chair that had been her mother's; 'My dear mother's' she would explain, 'and that was my dear father's. While I live they shall be opposite each other.'

She raised her head. The fire had sunk to a glow and the lamp was so dim that the room was shadowy and vague.

There seemed to be a figure in her father's old chair. It looked like a man leaning forward to the fire with hands between his knees. Now Miss Anna was conscious that she was not really surprised. She spoke, but she was never certain if her own voice were audible or only mental.

'Why are you here?' the voice asked, and the man answered—again she doubted the quality of that voice, whether real or imaginary.

'You are thinking of me so much. You have brought me.'

'Who are you, then?'

'The man you're praying for, Giles Greenway, who's in the condemned cell in the gaol.'

'Are you asleep, then? The outside you, I mean?'

'Yes—or something like it. They think I am. They're glad. I don't know rightly if I'm in the body or out of it, it's a queer detached sort of feeling. I felt like that once when I nearly died of typhoid.'

'But why do you come to me?' asked Miss Anna, 'we've never met. I'm nothing to you. Why don't you go to your poor wife?'

'I can't. Something shuts me out. Your thoughts have called me somehow. I'm here, that's all about it. I suppose you're a sensitive—a medium.'

'I'm sure I'm not,' she protested angrily. 'I've always avoided spiritualism.'

'But my dear lady, you can't help it. I suppose you are and that's all.'

'Still,' said Anna, 'I can't think why you've come.'

'Because you and I seem strangely *en rapport* against our judgment or your wishes I gather.'

'Of course I want to help you, poor soul.'

'I know. Your wish has drawn me here.'

'But what can I do now you've come?'

'You might help my wife—to-morrow or later.'

'I don't know her.'

'Still you might go to see her, tell her things. I want her to think gently of me. She thinks I didn't love her. She thinks I went away, deserted her. But really she kept me all the time, do you understand?'

'No.'

Miss Anna turned. She rose a little stiffly and sat down in her mother's old chair. She leaned far back. She did not quite wish to see the shadowy form in her father's chair.

'I'm an old maid. I never had a lover. Why should I understand?' she asked slowly.

'That's no earthly reason why you shouldn't. Half of the wives and mothers I've known are old maids, and half the old maids are born mothers. You *might* understand quite well. My wife didn't. It was her pride that blinded her. She thought the physical desertion was everything. She did not know that I was going back to her day by day like a dog to its mistress. But when once

I'd gone to that woman she wouldn't see or hear. That other—she was a black witch, a harpy. She wanted my soul too, but she never quite got it. You see, I killed her first. She longed to destroy. Do you know that? The Devil is very wasteful. He likes destruction. I'm an artist and so I want to construct—to build—to make. She wanted to have and then to spoil.'

'But you loved her too?'

'I had to win her. She put a spell upon me. She might now—the way she threw back her head, and the glitter of her hair by candlelight, and her little white teeth. She was so lithe too, like a cat. When I killed her she was limp. She lay there with her little silver slippers on the floor. I couldn't bear them. That was why I picked her up and put her in the cupboard under the stairs. I couldn't think where else to put her. I hated to see her. Murderers always want to get rid of the sight of what they've done. I used to notice that in reading cases like mine. I always read them. It's like a nightmare. You do the thing and then you can't believe it's done. It's like someone else's work and you want to hide and go away and wake up and forget.'

Anna peered a little out of her chair. She had a vague idea of her companion's profile and huddled figure.

'Why did you do it?' she asked.

'Because I hated her.'

'But you had loved her?'

'In a hungry, fierce way. She bewitched me with her voice, and her moods, and her strangeness. My wife was so simple, so good. She would not understand anything else or make any allowances. People and things were all white or all black to her. Because she loved me so much she could not forgive me. She told me that in a letter when she first knew I had been unfaithful. She said she could forgive her enemies but not her friends, and me least of all because she loved me so much. She said we had known Eden together, but now we were cast out, and there could be no return.'

'She was very young when she said that?'

'Yes, she is twenty-seven, but younger than many women of twenty. She has lived so austere, having no truck with evil. She is an idealist. They get let down, don't they? And yet we were so happy together in that house. It's called "Willows," because the garden slopes down to a stream hidden among willows. You hear the willow wren there. Do you know his little falling song? It goes like this . . .'

'I know,' said Miss Anna.

'We both loved our birds. There was the Jenny Whitethroat and the quiet little hedge-sparrows, they were rearing a beast of a young cuckoo before I left. Selfish, greedy fellow he was, like—he was like lust, asking all and giving nothing. Our birds—we always had them in common and the garden. She was so keen on the garden, always planning and contriving and saving up for it. I was to make her a bird-bath for the centre of the sunk garden. There were to be lilies by the yew hedge and bushes of lavender at each corner of the square bed, and rosemary and lad's love. I'd love to smell a sprig of rosemary.

'Yes, I was to model a bird-bath for her birthday. We used to have all sorts of ideas about it, and then she thought of one while she was weeding and ran to tell me. Do you know the legend of Christ as a child making the mud sparrows? He blessed them—was it?—and they flew away real birds. Or did He clap His hands? I forget that. I was to make Him a child of about five years old with one sparrow on his hand and four at his feet round the rim of the bath. Do you get the idea?'

'I do,' said Anna. 'Did you make it?'

'Not then; that really began the trouble. I had other work to finish and I hadn't time before her birthday. Then I forgot the date. Men do forget things. She minded so much. She sulked all day so I went out and . . . and I met the other, she was so gay and vivid, so different somehow. My wife began to be sad and dull. I made an effort or two to reach her, to win her back. But she wanted abjection and I wouldn't give it. I wanted to show her . . . to teach her that a man will go elsewhere if home is made dreary, and if he finds no response. Perhaps we were both lovers still . . . that was the trouble. Friends are wiser, they give more and take more. Lovers are so jealous, so exacting, so cruel; they want to hurt—do you know that? They want to hurt.'

'No, I don't understand that,' said Miss Anna, surprising herself, 'the . . . the only time I was in love I only wanted to do good to . . . to my loved one.'

'Ah!' The shadowy form nodded its head. 'You're the maternal woman, you see. Neither the woman I married nor the woman I murdered was maternal. That was the pity.'

'So you left her . . . your wife?' Anna asked.

'Yes, I threatened to, and she said "Go—you're dead to me now." So I went. The other had a bungalow out near the river,

such a lovely place, too good to spoil by murder. I wish I hadn't killed her there. If I'd thought beforehand, I'd have drowned her or killed her far from the bungalow. Now I've spoilt it for always.'

'Didn't you realise what you were doing?'

'No. At first it was all wild excitement and then horrid cold moments of sense when I knew I disliked her. And then the home-sickness began, the longing for the old quiet days at home, at "Willows" with our birds. I used to lie awake thinking of it. Then at last I got up early and started to model the bird-bath for Madge, my wife. I had a queer scheme—to finish it and get it cast and take it back and leave it one night in the garden where we'd planned to put it. I felt if she once saw it there she'd understand and forgive me. Perhaps she'd forgive and let me try again.

'I started modelling in a sort of loggia place there was at the bungalow. That other didn't like it. She thought me neglectful. She got jealous of my work. Some women do. She was like that. She wanted everything from a man, heart, soul, genius, body—all just to play with them and leave him empty.

'One day in a temper she upset the table and spoilt all my work. The clay was broken and destroyed. I shook her. She loved me for that. Do you understand?'

Anna nodded.

'Yes, I've known girls like that.'

'She got round me and won me back by all her arts, but part of me was very angry and could not forgive. Things were strained between us. Then one evening there came a letter from Madge. It had been sent on. I'll never know what she said, for that other woman guessed it was from a woman. She held it away from me to twit and taunt me. We got angrier and angrier, until we were fighting in earnest. The woman who worked for us had lighted a fire because it had been so damp. That other—she threw Madge's letter into the fire . . . just as she had overset the birds' bath. Then I wanted to kill her. I've felt like that to other people at moments, but not so much. I threw her down on the hearth and I banged her head again and again against the steel fender. Perhaps I strangled her . . . I don't know. It was her feet in the silver slippers that frightened me so. They . . . they looked so dead.'

'It's a very dreadful story,' said Anna, 'very dreadful. I suppose many cases are the same.'

There was heavy silence in the room. The clock ticked indifferently it seemed. Very severely the cathedral clock chimed out the

half hour. The fire dropped a little. Miss Anna asked another question.

'What about the bird-bath?'

'I'd finished it. I used to work when she was lying down and reading. And one day I took it in the car to be cast. It was the very day I killed her. It must be still there. The man is an Italian—Gnocchi by name, he's in Old Street at Westhaven. Probably he's kept it for someone to fetch. I want you to get hold of it somehow. That's where you can help. I feel you're sensible, practical, used to settling up people's affairs. You'll get it somehow, and you'll give it to my wife. Go to her to-morrow . . . tell her . . . make her understand. I've tried to get through to her, to get at her inner mind. I can't.'

'But she won't believe me,' Anna protested.

'She will. I can't see your face, but I know you're trustworthy. People don't doubt you, do they?'

'No.'

'Then go to her.'

'I will. Is there nothing else I can do?'

'No . . . no . . . Stand by me, comrade.'

'As best I can.'

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The next morning rather to Jessie's surprise Miss Anna came hastily out of the front door as the milkman arrived. It was a morning of white frost, crisp and sparkling. The Michaelmas daisies were still gay, and red Kaffir lilies shone in the little garden.

'I'm going to the eight o'clock service at the cathedral,' said Miss Anna shortly, 'have breakfast at nine for me.'

'I never!' Jessie exclaimed to the milkman. 'Well! Mr. Jervis, I suppose they're hanging him now. Do you know the mistress didn't know who he was last night? She's real innocent. I told her all she knows. But she kind of puts it away from her. I wonder what takes her to go to service on a Wednesday and she with a cough. Do you pass the gaol? I suppose there's a black flag up for him. It makes me creep somehow.'

By nine o'clock mistress and maid met tranquilly in the hall. Anna made no reference to their conversation.

'I shall be out all the afternoon, Jessie,' she said; 'if you have a 'bus guide you might bring it to me.'

Anna looked for an afternoon 'bus to Pole-Wyngate. It was

three o'clock when she reached the little old Worcestershire village. She descended at the church and without asking her way walked quickly and firmly down the road, and only paused at a gateway at the end of the village.

She went straight up to the door and rang the bell. When a maid came she asked to see Mrs. Greenway.

'She's not seeing anyone, ma'am.'

'But I have an important message. I must see her.'

The country girl wavered before authority.

'She's not seeing anyone. But if you went round the house you'd find her down in the garden. She's weeding there.'

Anna turned about and, passing the corner of the old gabled house, took a garden path through drifted beech leaves and among patches of pink and white cyclamen and pale Autumn crocuses.

The ground sloped away towards the stream. There was a sunk garden, leaf strewn, with grey lavender and belated pink roses. A woman was kneeling at a bed, a weeding fork in her hand. She lifted a tear-stained face to Anna's.

'You have brought me a message?' she said.

'Yes, from one who loves you.'

'From one I love?'

'Yes, your husband.'

'Ah!'

'Will you listen to me and not doubt?'

'Yes. I see you're true. I don't know how or why, but I've expected a message all day. I thought it might be the Chaplain. But you . . . you have been with him—my husband?'

'Yes.'

'Then sit here on this bench. Tell me everything.'

'I will,' said Anna.

W. M. LETTS.

*AUSTIN DOBSON : SOME LETTERS FROM HIS
FRIENDS.*

BY ALBAN DOBSON.

IV. 1894-1921.

[Pressure upon the limited space of *THE CORNHILL* has made it necessary to give in this concluding section only a limited number of personal and literary extracts from the later years of Austin Dobson's correspondence—which will be more fully dealt with in Mr. Alban Dobson's forthcoming book.—ED. (*CORNHILL*.)]

THE year 1894 saw the publication of the second series of 'Eighteenth Century Vignettes,' dedicated to Sir Walter Besant, who accepted the proposed dedication as 'the greatest honour possible from our sweetest poet.' He celebrated the occasion, too, by sending my father one of the large paper copies of the book, really beautifully bound, after the design of 'the great Tregaskis of Holborn.' 'I trust,' he writes, 'you will like the appearance of your lovely book in this garb. Beauty is all the more beautiful in flowered silk and satin petticoat.'

Here also is a letter from my father's cousin, Lord Rendel, acknowledging a copy of this book :

'I am very grateful. Your present is very handsome in itself but that is a small part of its value. I hope it gives you some pleasure to be able to give so much. The feeling that one has done something with one's life must be the best comfort of advancing years. We two, who began life somewhat together and are linked by many memories may I humbly hope enjoy alike without too much presumption something of this sort.

'I shall set your book in the best and safest shelf of my Hatchlands Library.'

I find few letters of special interest during 1895, though there was produced in that year a very beautiful two-volume edition of my father's poems in America, with an etched portrait by William Strang and illustrations by the French etcher, A. Lalauze. The edition comprised four different limited issues, two of which, of fifty copies in each case, were only obtainable in America.

The first letter in 1896 is from Alfred Austin, who, after an interregnum of four years following the death of Lord Tennyson,

had just been made Laureate. The letter is dated January 4, 1896, and reads :

'One of the earliest telegrams of congratulation I received was yours, and there is none I value more, not only because of your supreme mastery over verse, but because of that far higher gift, your generous temperament. I fancy we both would rather be "gentlemen" in the universal sense of that word, and not poets, than be poets, and not "gentlemen," and every gentleman is, like you, greatly magnanimous. I am sure it will interest you to know that the distinction assigned to me was none of my own seeking and that it came on me by *surprise*, on the last day of the year. I well remember what you said to me at Hall Caine's. But I buried it in my heart, and I maintained a dogged silence not only to my brethren of the pen, but to my own kith and kin. And now that the laurel has been given me, I feel utterly undeserving of it and I do not envy the man who could bring himself to think that he merits it. So I regard myself only as a representative Peer—not even *primus inter pares*. . . .'

The poem entitled 'A Postscript to Dr. Goldsmith's Retaliation, being an epitaph on Samuel Johnson, LL.D.,' first privately printed, then published in 1897 in *The Pageant*, was 'read for the author by the Master of the Temple at the dinner of the "Johnson Society" in Pembroke College, Oxford, on the 22nd June of 1896.'

Of this W. J. Courthorpe writes :

'It is truly kind of you to have sent me your Postscript. I have read it with delight. You have put Johnson's merits into an exquisite poetical nutshell—a genuine feat of criticism. What indeed would he say to your "prigs and slipshod romancers"? I should like to have heard the Master of the Temple reading your verses at the Pembroke dinner; but your beautiful copy of them will be a *κτῆμα ἐς αἰῶν*. Many thanks.'

Later in the year the third series of 'Eighteenth Century Vignettes' appeared, and one of the earliest recipients was Colonel W. F. Prideaux (the immortal bibliographer of R. L. Stevenson and a great collector of Austin Dobson's books) who wrote on October 19, 1896 :

'I have to thank you most cordially for your kind letter and for the "Vignettes," which will be placed on the shelf that holds my most valued possessions. Most of the papers are familiar to me, as I have read them in "Bibliographica" and "Longman," and

if my memory does not deceive me, I read the charming study on Covent Garden several years ago in the "English Illustrated," but like a picture of Hogarth, every fresh examination brings out some new detail, without which one feels the portrait would be incomplete, and which must inevitably go to the true making of the man or the times, and I for one am never tired of such studies. They are my favourite "Bedside Books." I was rejoiced to see no indication in the Prologue of a rumour which I have noticed in the newspapers that this Series was to be "the last of its clan"—No, we cannot yet release you from the duty of providing these delightful pictures of the "teacup times of hood and hoop, and while the patch was worn," with which you have bewitched me.'

One of my father's most faithful correspondents was Pastor Theodore Monod of Paris. My father had first met him at Trémel, in Brittany, at a Protestant guest-house where our family spent a summer holiday about the year 1895. M. Monod, who was equally at home in English as in his native tongue, is best known perhaps in this country by his authorship of the well-known hymn, 'Oh! the bitter shame and sorrow,' written in English, be it noted, by a Frenchman. My father and he had much in common, and their first meeting in that eventful summer led to a long interchange of letters. M. Monod's letters were always full of little poetic fancies, some in English, some in French. One of his early letters, written on October 28, 1896, contains no less than three of such, two triolets in English and one in French. One of the former runs :

'A man of letters, strange to say,
Is seldom fond of letter-writing;
He puts it off from day to day. . .
A man of letters!—strange to say.
Your patient kindness he will pay
With other labours, more inviting:
A man of letters, strange to say,
Is seldom fond of letter-writing.'

Another MS. poem of his, dated the last day of 1898, may illustrate his mastery of English verse.

OF AN EVENING.

'I thought my heart had died, ah! long ago,
And that the years had filled the vacant place
With some poor substitute, a clumsy thing,

A make-believe, an artificial flower,
 That breathed no fragrance, for it had no life.
 To-night, there drops upon my lonely desk,
 Bathed in the mellow radiance of the lamp,
 From an old batch of letters, one thin scrip
 Of lilac paper . . . scarcely lilac, now . . .
 And lo ! my eyes are dimmed with happy tears . . .
 My buried heart is beating, burning still :
 It sleeps in patient quietness of hope,
 As daisies yet unseen, all winter long,
 Beneath the snow lie waiting for the Spring.'

The first letter of 1897—although I have a suspicion it may belong to 1896—is from Augustine Birrell, and relates to a copy of Dr. Samuel Clarke's edition of Homer in four volumes 1740-54, which had once belonged to Samuel Johnson and ultimately came into my father's possession. He presented it to Mr. Birrell apparently for the Johnson Club. The letter is dated March 30 and runs :

'I feel a little ashamed at having diverted into such a very private channel as myself and my own Library, a gift you originally designed for the Johnson Club of which I am a member. Thus stated, my conduct looks black—but my heart does not convict me—I am sure I have done the right thing. The Johnson Club only *dines*, it has no library, it is not a gathering of collectors or connoisseurs—in fine it is no place for your delightful *relic*. Now with me it has a home. But why did you part with it I cannot think!—Sometimes one has these strange whims of stripping oneself of one's possessions—undressing before going to bed—but it is an impulse that must be checked. I have no manner of doubt of the genuineness of the inscription—It has veracity in every letter. I have referred to your *Second Series*.¹ You have falsified your own writings—You there speak of yourself as "being fortunate enough to possess" this Homer. You must correct this in your next edition or I shall write indignantly to the *Athenaeum*, correcting you. I wonder what return I can make you. Have you the *Foulis* Poems by Mr. Gray MDCCLXVIII? I have a duplicate. Say the word and it is yours. But I shall always be your Debtor.'

Apart from the issue of a privately printed 'Ballad to Her

¹ *Eighteenth Century Vignettes*, Second Series; vide the paper 'Johnson's Library.'

Majesty,' the Jubilee year of 1897 saw the publication of the First Collected Edition, proper, of my father's poems.

Of letters relating to this let me quote one from A. C. Benson, from whom my father received many letters. It is dated October 26, 1897 :

'My only reason for not writing to thank you yesterday for your delightful present was that Monday is always a day of hurried and impatient work, and I wanted to wait for a more tranquil hour. The hour has come, but is accompanied by severe tooth-ache! so that I can only say ungracefully that I prize and love your gift, and that it gives me a thrill of pride that you should have thought of me. I say with entire sincerity—not craving sympathetic correction because I know its truth—that one real boon of having tried to be a poet and failed, is that it gives one more genuine pleasure in the works of a master, who does by instinct what one cannot achieve by patience. I know many of your poems very well, and I shall hope to know them better still.'

It is no doubt true that the first draft of my father's poems, or most of them, came by instinct, but it would be idle to deny that the subsequent retouching and polishing, to which they were invariably submitted, did not involve enormous patience.

In 1899 my father and mother attended the wedding of Lord Crewe and Lady Peggy Primrose, to whom they presented a copy of "Collected Poems" with the following inscription. This drew a charming acknowledgment from Lord Crewe, to whose kindness my father was indebted on more than one occasion.

'In the duo of love
There is little libretto ;
There are few rhymes but 'dove'
In the duo of Love ;
Yet we prize it above
All our epic falsetto ;—
In the duo of love
There is little libretto.'

The Boer War drew one poem from my father. In its first form it was sent to Sir Henry Craik, under whose sympathetic criticism it was recast. The new variant satisfied the critic 'most completely,' and, as he earnestly hoped, was published, appearing in the first number of the *Sphere* early in 1900.

RANK AND FILE.

I.

' O undistinguished Dead
Whom the bent covers, or the rock strewn steep
Shows to the stars, for you I mourn, I weep,
O undistinguished Dead !

II.

None knows your name.
Blackened and blurred in the wild battle's brunt
Hotly you fell, with all your wounds in front :
This is your fame !'

I like to regard these lines as an epitaph to 'An unknown soldier.' I am not entirely sure that my father was satisfied with his 'Rondeaux of the Great War' which were to follow nearly twenty years later, and I am always rather sorry that I included in the 'Complete Poetical Works' of 1923 a poem on the War, which my father had sent to *The Times* and then, on second thoughts, recalled, but as J. C. Squire said in a kindly review 'in the eyes of this candid old poet, no doubt, rondeaux were the best contribution he could make to the Allied Cause so he composed rondeaux. Perhaps, after all, for this light that they throw on so delightful a character, readers will be glad to have them.'

The eighteenth of January 1900 was my father's sixtieth birthday. Naturally, therefore, a good many of the letters of that year bear upon this event, but I only select one or two. In a letter from W. E. Henley dated May 8, 1900, I find the following paragraph :

'I learned, by accident, that you, my dear Dobson, were sixty to-day. I couldn't well have known it "on my own"; but I laid by the journal with a qualm. As if I had done wrong in not being among the first to congratulate and cheer you ! I do so now—believe me, I do so now ; and, as I do so now, my memory ranges back over thirty years and more to that hospital ward in Smithfield, and those numbers of St. Paul's in which I read (thanks to a very elegant haughty Matron . . .) the *Marquise* and the *Story of Rosina*. And I shall drink a cup to you to-night, dear Master that you were, and wish you, with a full heart, as many anniversaries more as you care to have.'

From the verses written to commemorate the same occasion, I quote, with his kind permission, the following lines by Sir Owen

Seaman, which first appeared in April 1900, in a fugitive weekly called *The Londoner*, and was subsequently reprinted in the Author's 'A Harvest of Chaff.'

TO MR. AUSTIN DOBSON AFTER HIMSELF.
(RONDEAU OF VILLON.)

'At sixty years, when April's face
Retrieves, as now, the winter's cold,
Where tales of other Springs are told
You keep your courtly pride of place.
Within the circle's charmed space
You rest unchallenged, as of old
At sixty years.

Not Time nor Silence sets its trace
On golden lyre and voice of gold;
Our Poet's Poet, still you hold
The Laurels got by no man's grace—
At sixty years.'

Another letter of 1900 which I reproduce is one from Sir John Murray, which has the additional interest of certain verses referring to the *Monthly Review*, of which Sir Henry Newbolt had just become editor. It is dated Sept. 8, 1900 :

'Your very kind missive has been following me about but I must without further delay write a line to tell you how much pleasure it has given me.

'I have spent a good deal of the past two days in the train : and perhaps idle hours beget idle fancies, for on looking over the enclosed, I am half ashamed of my own impertinence in daring to riposte with my "painted lath" to your skilled rapier, but I venture to send the enclosed as they may serve as a foil.

'I do not know if you are acquainted with our editor—Newbolt— . . . '

The verses enclosed were as follows :

'Who dares to trust on fickle sea
Of Public taste his Argosy
Must seek Minerva's aid to fit
His planks of wisdom—sails of wit,
And, lest plain speaking give offence
Cordage of tact and common sense.

Nought can those flimsy barks avail
 Painted to sell and not to sail,
 Which for a moment catch the Sun
 Then sink into oblivion.

But still his labour will be vain
 Who dares to tempt that treacherous main
 Except his pilot rule the crew
 With hand inexorably true,
 Except his eye be quick to see,
 His mind to judge—with sympathy.
 Even so may all endeavours fail
 Unless he catch the favouring gale
 Which critic fair, and kindly friend
 And public praise alone can send.

And so, kind friend, I now return
 My hearty thanks to you,
 And trust that you may tempted be
 One day to join the crew.

The lot is cast—but still it lies
 Enshrouded in the dark.
 Content we wait, and hope that our
 NEWBOLT will hit his mark.'

The year 1901 opened with a letter from Mrs. G. F. Watts, which evidently referred to a copy of some lines which my father had written on G. F. Watts' picture, entitled 'Good Luck to your Fishing' :

'The most charming moment of our Xmas this year was when entered a song singing—How charmed we were and how much we both value the dear little song, I find it difficult to tell you. I can only say, as it stays with us, that it is one of our most valued treasures. I have got a little red Cupid to put above it—which is to be honoured by being framed with the song. I cannot say how pleased and touched my husband was. . . .'

Another volume of verse, privately printed as 'Carmina Votiva,' 1901, owed its appearance in England to the critical insistence of Sir Edmund Gosse. This consisted of a small collection of 'Occasional Poems and Inscriptions' designed to make Part II. of the Second Volume of 'Miscellanies,' published in New York, 1902, as part of a projected uniform edition of Austin Dobson's

Works. In this form it threatened to remain practically unknown in England, and Sir Edmund Gosse, who subsequently took charge of the printing arrangements, wrote with final urgency on May 8, 1901 :

‘I make one more earnest and serious appeal to you not to bring out this delicious collection of verses and inscriptions as a mere appendix to an obscure American publication.

‘It is madness to do so. They would form a most charming little book of their own, by which you would gain money and pleasure. You might—if you chose—print but one edition, and so limit that edition as to be able almost immediately to carry out your wish to shred the whole into your American pot.

‘But *do* publish them here, as a little separate volume, first. I beg you, as a friend, as a critic, as a bibliophil, as an amateur of your fame, to do this. Don’t injure yourself for the mere obstinate pleasure of refusing to do what your best friends recommend.’

The summer of this year saw the retirement of my father, after nearly forty-five years of faithful service, from the Board of Trade, and the occasion called forth from Andrew Lang the following verses, which were read at a dinner given in my father’s honour, in November 1901, by the Whitefriars Club. The verses, which Mrs. Lang kindly allows me to reproduce from his ‘Complete Poetical Works,’ were read at the dinner by Augustine Birrell.

‘Dear Poet, now turned out to grass
 (Like him who reigned in Babylon),
 Forget the seasons overlaid
 By business and the Board of Trade :
 And sing of old-world lad and lass
 As in the summers that are gone.

Back to the golden prime of Anne !
 When you ambassador had been,
 And brought o’er sea the King again,
 Beatrix Esmond in his train,
 Ah, happy bard to hold her fan,
 And happy land with such a Queen !

We live too early, or too late,
 You should have shared the pint of Pope,
 And taught, well pleased, the shining shell
 To murmur of the fair Lepel,
 And changed the stars of St. John’s fate
 To some more happy horoscope.

By duchesses with roses crowned,
 And fed with chicken and champagne,
 Urbane and witty, and too wary
 To risk the feud of Lady Mary,
 You should have walked the courtly ground
 Of times that cannot come again.

Bring back these years in verse or prose,
 (I very much prefer your verse !)
 As on some twenty-ninth of May
 Restore the splendour and the sway,
 Forget the sins, the wars, the woes—
 The joys alone must you rehearse.

Forget the dunces (there is none
 So stupid as to snarl at you) ;
 So may your years with pen and book,
 Run pleasant as an English brook,
 Through meadows floral in the sun,
 And shadows fragrant of the dew.

And thus at ending of your span—
 As all must end—the world shall say,
 “ His best he gave ; he left us not
 A line that saints could wish to blot,
 For he was blameless, though a man,
 And though a poet, he was gay ! ”

Apart from the pain caused to him by the death of almost his oldest friend, Cosmo Monkhouse, which all but synchronised with my father's retirement, I think that my father was glad to find himself relieved of the shackles of officialdom and free to devote himself, in a far more leisured fashion than it had ever been possible before, to his researches into the eighteenth century which he loved so much. The only thing that troubled him was his eyesight, which even at this comparatively early date was beginning to give him anxiety. After a short holiday in Switzerland—in a way he was just as happy exploring the Thames from Chiswick to Fulham—he plunged into his ‘ *Life of Richardson*, ’ in the ‘ *English Men of Letters* ’ series. He had been offered three years for the task, but completed it in one, so that it was published in 1902.

I must not forget, however, to mention that his retirement from the public service seemed to bring into prominence a suggestion that had been made a good many times before that he should pay

a visit—a sort of lecturing tour—to the United States, where, as must have been obvious from some of the previous letters, he had not a few friends and many admirers. In fact I think I am right in saying that there is still a sort of Austin Dobson Club in America called the Autonoë Club. On October 1, 1901, Jos Leon Gobeille—who, one must gather from his many letters, was rather a genial and breezy correspondent—writes :

‘When last I saw you a year or two ago, we discussed the possibility of your coming to this country and giving a series of readings from your own works.

‘A splendid and popular program could be made up, partly quotation, partly gossip, to close with some homely thing, say “The Sun Dial.”

‘As a mere business man I believe you would be instantly successful here and I would be glad to underwrite this city for a tidy amount if you came here as your own manager.

‘Why not impress one of your daughters as a companion and try it over here now that your official duties do not hamper you?’

Or, as he playfully put it when renewing his invitation six years later :

‘I remember that you have a galaxy of daughters. Select one—possibly not the most amiable! (unfortunate phrase, which gets me disliked from the beginning!!!). She would be companion, and useful to fend you from bores “*has beens*” and “*never-wases*” and to protect you from such as would try to kill you with kindness. One thing more you must do for me. Go to your photographers and have him print me a portrait from your favourite negative. I will frame it neatly and hang it with the rest of my “Dobson plunder.”’

Mr. Gobeille describes himself as a mere business man, but from his many letters he was also a bibliophil with a very nice taste in rare editions. At all events this was only one of several letters in the same key, but nothing came of the project. The fact is that my father disliked travelling far from home. He enjoyed the society of his friends at the National Club or the Athenæum—he was at his best then, so some of them tell me, but he was nevertheless a very good best by his own fireside.

On receiving the American volume of ‘Miscellanies,’ Pastor Theodore Monod wrote, on his holiday at Yport, September 29, 1902 :

'Cher confrère et ami, Allow me to re-affirm my gratitude for "Miscellanies (Second Series)" although it can hardly be the volume,¹ reserved for a "very select" anthology of friends, with the hope of which you have made my mouth water. How I would enjoy a visit to you, and your study, and your copy of *Vater Cats* ! There I should sit contented, "turning the tall pages timidly" (a line as graphic as a picture). Among the occasional verses, I particularly like "*In Angel-Court*," "*To Laurence Hutton*," "*Spring stirs and Wakes*," and the stanza (inter pulchras pulcher-rima):

' "Shall we not leave to sing ?" (p. 272).

' "*Omar Khayam* " is a most clever and amusing attempt to exalt a hero for whom you do not care a fig. (Neither do I, whether in his English or in his French dress.) Have you translated "*Elle et Lui*," as you thought of doing ? I have tried, but it would be rather a hindrance to both of us than a help, if we should exchange notes before we have done. Shall I fill up the page with quite a recent sketch ?'

UN SOIR TRISTE.

'L'invisible soleil a disparu sans gloire,
Le ciel sombre descend sur la mer presque noire ;
Les vagues dans la nuit gémissent faiblement
Voici qu'une clarté lointaine se découvre,
Et le phare, éclipsé de moment en moment,
Semble un œil flamboyant qui se ferme et se rouvre.'

'Side Walk Studies,' also published in 1902, was dedicated to my father's old colleague at the Board of Trade, John Waddon Martyn, with the following lines :

'As one who on the idle shore
Bends at the Galley bench no more,
I look back to the days when we
Tugged the long sweeps in company.
Yet there were moments even then
When there was thought of Books and Men,
When there was talk of verse and prose—
I send you these remembering those.'

Sir Henry Craik was warm in critical appreciation of the book, and wrote on October 26, 1902 :

¹ *Carmina Voliva* (vide supra).

' . . . Good as its elder brothers were I think this is the choicest of the family. It is not only that, as Lamb says of Walton's Angler, "it would sweeten a man's temper at any time to read it," but it seems so considerably to provide something for all tastes—some new aspects of so many different questions on which it brings us not only entertainment, but sound information and new ideas.

' You have a touch, the delicacy of which no one who uses his pen can equal. This is a sincere tribute and one which I am certain that many far better judges than I would willingly accord. I wish it were a higher praise than it at first sight seems. It would still be not a whit too strong.'

Another short letter about the same book (dated October 13) was from Sidney T. Irwin, one of the sixth form masters of whom Clifton College has reason to be so proud. He was a man of unequalled genius for quotation: to be in his presence even for a short time was a liberal education:

' How very delightful of you to send me another of your books! That too I found to-day in the rarely visited pigeon-hole—I have given up looking there for my things of late or my thanks would not have been so tardy.

' I see the book is full of delicious things—I opened on the chapter about titled authors, and the couplet on Bath Easton at once attracted me!

' I am trying to make a paper for the boys about Rasselas; Johnson's defence of pious pilgrimages is a passage that many of *your grateful readers*, it seems to me, would do well to learn by heart. I like pilgrimages immensely; but, unlike you, to quote the lexicographer again, I do *not* "Bring back the wealth of the Indies because I do *not* take the wealth of the Indies with me"!! . . .

' *P.S.*—Mr. Forman's book went back on Friday morning. Many thanks for the stamps. How scrupulous you are!! I fear "*I come a long way behind*," as Seldon says of a Bishop's wife.'

A neat felicitation on the Richardson volume came from Sir Edmund Gosse (November 8):

' Your great and faithful admirer, my wife, settled down with great gusto to the study of your Richardson—beginning "Well, I hoped it was going to be a much bigger book than this," which speaks well for her appetite. My felicitations on such a delightful task completed.'

A week later Sir Leslie Stephen wrote more fully :

'Accidents prevented me from opening your parcel till yesterday when I was sorry to find that I had left your kind letter so long unanswered.

'Of the book I need only say that I read it with thorough enjoyment and agreement—I scarcely differ from any point in the criticism and admire your skill in making an interesting biography out of the letters. I feel a kind of pride in the book, as its merits are in some degree reflected upon your collaborators. I had an experience the other day which rather amused me. I re-read a good deal of *Clarissa*. The book impressed me at times as simply repulsive, as bad as the worst of Zola—I fancy that it was because the process of having one's nose rubbed in such a mess so persistently suggests a certain callousness not to say brutality in the rubber. Anyhow I report the sensation as a psychological fact, not as implying my settled view.

'I find it harder to speak of your letters. I can claim no gratitude from you for not having been swinish enough to refuse your pearls for the CORNHILL. But it is pleasant to think that, rightly or wrongly, my editorial relations to you gave me a place in your kindly regard. You have more than once shown a friendly feeling towards me by which I have been touched and which I cordially reciprocate.

'Such things are more than ever valuable to me—I am doomed to an invalid life henceforth and doubt whether I shall ever meet you again at the London Library. I can still do some work and have no serious suffering. Still I am by force a recluse : and it is gratifying to know that friends whom I do not meet think of me occasionally with kindness. Your letter was a most welcome personal greeting and I thank you for it cordially.'

Space permits but a few quotations from the correspondence of the later years. In 1907 appears an amusing letter from Professor G. Saintsbury, which begins with some verse. They were the result of my father's suggestion to Mr. Frowde that Professor Saintsbury should be asked to edit the 'Oxford Thackeray.' The lines ran :

'To DOBSON kind, and DOBSON just
May I be thankful till I bust !
View him, ye Muses ! As he stands
With cornucopias in his hands
Not for to serve his private ends,
But for to lavish on his friends !

See how he prompts his grateful task
 (what gratefuller could G. S. ask ?)
 Herald and harbinger to be
 Of mighty William Makepeace T !
 Should that GREAT MAN refuse t'approve
 (Avert it, Fate ! Forbid it, Jove !)
 Muses ! lend wind to puff my cheeks
 (What time Fr—wde's gold distends my breeks !)
 And bid the world with trumpet voice
 " Observe me ! I am DOBSON'S CHOICE ! "

' Seriously I am heartily obliged to you and have told Frowde that I'm his man bar Nemesis. I have asked him whether he means the novels only. It will be a pity if he does not include the " Poems " and the " Roundabouts. " . . . '

The following, from Maurice Hewlett, dated December 7, 1908, was evidently in reply to my father's criticisms on a book of verses, which was subsequently published and was, I fancy, this author's second volume of poetry.

' That was a very kind letter you wrote me. It will require a totally different style if I am ever to hate you. As things are, I am greatly uplifted by what you tell me—and shall now proceed, strictly on the anonymous task. I don't expect to be read much, but do believe that if I am read at all that is the only way to get an unbiassed opinion.

' I am going now to peer into all your tickings and pointings. I suspect you are right about *Turk* and *dirk*. Woe is me ! I rather liked that verse. *Daughters* and *Waters* I think I could defend. I carry my love of simplicity very far in versifying, and would rather be banal than rhetorical or inflated. One of the astounding things about Dante is his courage in never refusing an image—even when there is a risk of being ridiculous. Sometimes, indeed, he is ridiculous ; but I respect that sincerity of his so much that I can never bring myself to admit it.

' I see your point in the four lines of *Leto's Child*. They are rather ugly—and shall be amended. But I had great difficulty in that piece in conveying precisely what I meant and felt—which was nothing perverted (I need hardly say), but yet was " not quite nice. " I must labour over that again—if labour is all.

' I feel guilty when you tell me of your chill, lest it may have been due to the depressing influence of my Muse ! We missed you at the Corner ¹ on Friday, and wondered what kept you.'

¹ A small coterie of members of the National Club.

The year 1910 produced a large crop of letters, chiefly no doubt on account of the fact that January 18 of that year was my father's seventieth birthday, which was celebrated in a manner already described in these pages.

In May 1910 my father contributed to *The Times* some 'In Memoriam' verses to King Edward VII. These drew from Thomas Hardy the following, dated May 22, 1910 :

'I was very glad to see that you had, after all, been inspired to write a few verses, and I knew, without your telling me, that the Muse had unexpectedly touched you up to it, in spite of yourself. They are direct and forcible lines, with no rhetorical shams in them of the kind we have been treated to in such profusion during the last few days.'

On August 1, 1911, Mr. Edward Marsh wrote—I do not reprint all his letter :

'I have a young friend who is putting me through a course of minor poets. Do you know the works of Anna Bunston, and Father Tabb—to which he has introduced me? I do like their names—I don't know if I dare send you the triolets, which gurgled, as F. Thompson would say, into my brain, when I saw the title pages. You will admit they are perfect in form, I hope.

'The name of "Anna Bunston"
 Befits a Queen of Song.
 Oh Muse, who lightly punst on
 The name of "Anna Bunston,"
 Bethink thee, ere thou runst on,
 Thy captious course along—
 The name of "Anna Bunston"
 Befits a Queen of Song.

Yet would I softlier whisper
 The smoother sound of "Tabb."
 Oh lonely lyric lisper,
 Yet would I softlier whisper
 Thy crumbier name and crisper,
 Which crooked critics crab.
 Yet would I softlier whisper
 The smoother sound of "Tabb."'

'The expression "crooked critics," which helped me out so seasonably with my alliteration, is borrowed from Francis Thompson,

as a compliment to my young friend, who is Thompson's godson. I introduced him as such to a butterfly bluestocking lady of my acquaintance—and she told him she was so fond of his uncle, Mr. Watson's, poems. Another proof of how wise it is for poets to choose really distinctive names like "Bunston" and "Tabb."

My father's eighty-first and last birthday, in 1921, prompted quite a number of letters. Let me quote two—the first dated January 18, 1921, from his old admirer Clement Shorter :

'And this is your eighty-first birthday and I have had the date in my pocket-book and transfer it each year to a new book. I enclose you a sample. You won't use it but you can give it away. In years gone by you could have written brilliant verses on the possibilities of a pocket-book. Well, I hope you are happy. You share your years with two dear friends of mine Hardy and Clodd. Both are well and I hope you are. Hardy spoke to me on his telephone from Dorchester wishing me a Happy New Year on New Year's Day—the only time he has ever used it, his wife tells me. Clodd writes me cheery letters and so I conclude one is younger at 81 than at 63 which is my age. I feel worn out sometimes and ask myself if life is worth living after 60 and if the happiness of the old is all make belief. But this is a mood : and after three years of unutterable loneliness I am cheerful again. Well, you must think on this your birthday of all the happiness you have given by your writings. For myself I know of none from whom I have received so many kindnesses and so with abundant good wishes. . . .'

The other, dated January 19, 1921, is from another veteran, Frederic Harrison, still at that time unceasingly active :

'Heartiest good wishes to you and my congratulations on the very interesting "interview" in *The Times*. I am entirely of your mind in all your judgments of men and books. All hail! ye Victorians! Ye were serious, clean, and steadfast, and ye did not cry—go up Bald-heads!—to your fathers!

'It is now quite twenty years that I gave up my regular reading of recent ephemerals. I came to "years of discretion" with the present century and gave up London—Mudie—and Clubs, and resolved to "live cleanly." I have long re-read the great books—Latin—Greek poets—Tacitus—Lucian—Sterne—Scott—Fielding—Austen and Thackeray. I really *cannot* read 3 pages of a modern novel! It is like listening to what the man and woman in the street might say in a tram-car. At this moment, I am trying to understand Einstein, and reading Montaigne, Erasmus, Gray's Letters,

and oddly enough for the *first time* Smollett. He always disgusted me and I have a bad edition with Cruickshank's drawings, and I could not get on. But at last I see what life, what invention, what English!—brute as he is. He explains Fielding's faults and justifies those rotten plays of H. F. What an age it was! I never was a "volcano,"—but I am utterly *extinct*. . . . But I wait the end in peace and content.'

Maurice Hewlett also saw *The Times* 'interview,' because he wrote on the same day :

'I see by *The Times* to-day that you have had a birthday, which I daresay would have been a happy one but for the affliction of its young man peeping and botanising. I was also touched also and sensibly uplifted by your kind reference to me. Remember that I too am a Victorian, and 60 on Saturday; remember that when I began to pipe you were an Olympian; and don't hesitate to believe that praise from you means very much to me.'

(Concluded.)

THE 'BLUE MEN' OF IRELAND.

BY DONALD A. MACKENZIE.

A FEW years before King Alfred was born, and about the time that the force of Danish buccaneers, who had been permitted to settle on Thanet, treacherously broke faith and, having 'ravaged all Kent to the eastward,' enforced the first payment of the Danegeld, two Norse vikings, the sons of a prince named Ronald (Rögnvald), carried to Ireland from North Africa a 'great host' of Moorish prisoners. In the 'Annals of Ireland,' by Duald Mac-Firbis, they are referred to as the 'Blue Men.' These 'Annals,' it may be explained, are a mixture of legendary matter and fragments of history, dating from about 573 till 913, which Duald had either copied from ancient documents or taken down from oral traditions passed on from generation to generation by Gaelic scholars, as were the Polynesian traditions by the learned men of the Maoris of New Zealand. Duald's genuine historical scraps can be checked by comparison with statements from other sources, including the Icelandic sagas. Sometimes, however, he disagrees with the sagas, but as the sagas occasionally contradict one another, we cannot discredit Duald on that account. His story regarding the 'Blue Men' is wholly without saga confirmation, Ronald and his sons never having had any connection with Iceland, but, as will be shown, these Moorish aliens have not been wholly lost to tradition, for vague but significant memories of their exploits survive in Hebridean folk-lore, while their curious appellation is preserved in a Gaelic place-name.

Duald's story of the early Norse vikings is dated 864—the year before a recorded eclipse of the sun which took place, as has been ascertained, at 1.30 P.M. on January 1, 865. The annalist tells that there had been much unrest in Lochlainn (Scandinavia), and that Ronald, the eldest son of King Halfdan, was forced into exile by his two younger brothers. If this monarch was really Halfdan the Black, then Ronald was an elder, and, perhaps, an illegitimate brother of Harold Fairhair (Harfagri), who subsequently made himself sole ruler of Norway. Some other petty king named Halfdan may, however, have been the father of Ronald. According to Duald, Ronald and his sons migrated to Orkney. There the exiled prince remained with a younger son. His two elder sons

became vikings (buccaneers) and ultimately collected 'a great host' which they 'drew from every quarter.' They ravaged in Britain, in France and in Saxony and appear to have gained a footing in Ireland. From what Duald says, they expected that their father would return to Scandinavia. But Ronald, as we gather from references in the narrative, could only have done so as a pirate. He was forced to make Orkney his headquarters, though much against his will, and apparently he had cause to regret the departure of his adventurous elder sons.

The young vikings had their base of operations in Ireland, probably at Dublin. They spent a winter there, and when the viking season opened again they led an expedition to Spain, where they plundered freely. At the time the greater part of Spain was held by the Moslems, and its coasts were frequently harried by Scandinavian pirates. Sailing southward, Ronald's sons reached the 'Gaditanean Straits' (Straits of Gibraltar) and, entering the Mediterranean, made a descent on the North African coast. In their first conflict with the Moors they proved to be the victors.

That night one of the brothers had a dream, in which, as Duald tells, it was revealed to him that his younger brother in Orkney would be slain. On awakening, he addressed his viking brother, saying, 'Brother, it is foolish and reckless of us to be waging war in country after country throughout the world, instead of doing the will of our father and winning back our ancestral domains. Our father will be left alone and in sorrow in a land which is not his. His younger son, as has been revealed to me, will fall in a battle from which he himself is to make narrow escape.'

As the young viking spoke in this doleful manner, a Moorish army came in sight. The Scandinavians sprang to arms and were soon involved in a desperate struggle, being apparently greatly outnumbered. Early in the battle, the dreamer rushed forward and engaged in combat with the king of the Moors. With a single blow of his great sword, he cut off the king's right hand. But this daring feat did not turn the tide of battle, which was waged fiercely until darkness came on, neither side gaining the advantage. The invaders and defenders duly challenged each other to renew the struggle on the following day.

During the night, as it chanced, the Moorish king fled from the camp, and when his troops became aware of this next morning, they lost heart and broke in flight before the attacking Scandinavians. Ronald's sons, following up their success, plundered and

laid waste the country, taking many prisoners whom they conveyed to their ships. Duald Mac-Firbis says that these prisoners were the so-called 'Blue Men.' Evidently the Scandinavians were in need of them, for their casualties had been heavy. Almost every third man in their force, Duald relates, had been slain in their battles with the Moors. The prisoners were probably made 'galley slaves' and, as such, had to row the Viking vessels to the Irish naval base. Duald says that 'these "Blue Men" were long in Ireland.'

We do not know what became of Ronald. Perhaps he perished, as did his younger son, during a raid on the Norwegian or some other coast. Duald is silent regarding his ultimate fate. Nor does he give the names of his elder sons. We gather from other sources, however, that they were named Halfdan and Sigfrith. They were prevented from returning to Norway and winning back their ancestral domains. Apparently they became powerful vikings. In the end they threw in their lot with the Danes, and for a period they were joint rulers of the Danish kingdom. As a Danish leader, Halfdan was slain in Ireland in the year 877. According to the 'Annals of Ulster,' he fell in 'a small battle' which was fought between the 'White Gentiles' (Norwegians) and the 'Black Gentiles' (Danes) at Lough Cuan. At the time the Norwegians and Danes were struggling for supremacy not only in Ireland but in France.

Our interest, however, is not with this struggle, but with the Moorish captives known as the 'Blue Men.' It is probable that these aliens were utilised not only as 'galley slaves' but as fighting men. Some of them appear to have been transported by vikings to the Outer Hebrides, because Gaelic speakers still refer to one of the Hebridean straits as 'the Stream of the Blue Men' (*sruth nam fear gorm*). On modern maps it is named 'Sound of Shiant'; it stretches between the south-east coast of the island of Lewis and Harris and the group called the Shiant Islands which, by the way, were recently purchased from the Leverhulme estate by Mr. Compton Mackenzie, the novelist, whose ancestors formerly owned Lewis and a considerable portion of the mainland of Ross and Cromartyshire. The Shiant Isles ('the sacred isles') have long been associated with the 'Blue Men.' It may be that some viking kept them there during the winter season. The islands cannot be approached by a vessel except in calm weather and prisoners could not leave them except by swimming.

In Hebridean folklore the 'Blue Men' (*na fir ghorm*) are reputed to haunt the 'Sound of Shiant,' having become supernatural beings.

It is told that they have 'long grey faces' (*aodann fada glas*), and may sometimes be seen swimming in the sea in the vicinity of the Shiant Isles. Some explain their colour appellation by asserting that they wear 'blue caps' or 'blue raiment'; others hold that their bodies are quite 'blue.' The term 'black' (*dubh*) is, curiously enough, never applied, although Duald Mac-Firbis, in his reference to the original 'Blue Men,' says that the Moors 'are similar to negroes' (in complexion), or, literally, 'the same as blackness.' *Gorm* (blue) must have been used in reference to them instead of *dubh* (black), because the Moorish fighting men, or sailors, were wholly or partly attired in blue, having, perhaps, a superstitious preference for that colour.

The Hebridean folk-stories tell that fishermen have occasionally caught one of the 'Blue Men' as he lay asleep, or unconscious, on the sea. But invariably the captive revived, and, if bound, released himself and leapt back into the sea. It is also told in the folk-tales that the 'Blue Men' were in the habit of swimming out from the Shiant Isles and boarding and capturing any boats that dared to enter the Sound of Shiant. On one occasion, however, a large vessel appeared in the 'Blue Men's Stream,' and although the 'Blue Men' came swimming round it and attempted to climb on board, they were completely baffled. Their power is said to have declined after that incident. The fishermen of Harris and Skye still speak of them, however, as 'stormy petrels.' When 'Blue Men' are sighted off Rudha Hunish in Skye, bad weather may be expected. The restlessness of the shallow sound of Shiant is said to be caused by the restless and troublesome 'Blue Men.'

It would appear that the traditions regarding the original 'Blue Men' and their descendants who were engaged in piratical exploits with the old Vikings and were, perhaps, 'wintered' on the Shiant Isles, have become, in the course of time, mixed up with traditions regarding ancient sea-gods and the supernatural seal-folk and were-seals. Martin, the seventeenth-century writer, tells of an annual Hebridean ceremony in which a sea-god, named 'Shony,' was invoked. He says that at Hallowtide the inhabitants of Lewis regularly offered to 'Shony' until about thirty years before his visit, and he gives the following account of the ceremony:

'The inhabitants round the island came to the church of St. Mulvay, having each man his provision along with him; every family furnished a peck of malt, and this was brewed into ale; one of their number was picked out to wade into the sea up to the

middle, and, carrying a cup of ale in his hand, standing still in that posture, cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Shony, I give you this cup of ale, hoping that you'll be so kind as to send us plenty of sea-ware (sea-weed) for enriching our ground the ensuing year," and so threw the cup of ale into the sea. This was performed in the night-time.'

A candle which had been lit on the chapel altar was then extinguished. Thus was the ancient god invoked.

In Shetland and Orkney and elsewhere in the north of Scotland, there are still traces of a belief in 'sea-trows.' These supernatural beings are supposed to appear above the water in the shape of seals. Sometimes they divest themselves of their seal-skins and appear on the shores as beautiful girls and comely lads. In their dwellings at the bottom of the sea they are of human shape, and only use their 'seal coverings' when they rise to the surface. Were-seals are, like were-wolves, animal shapes assumed by magic-working human beings. In Scottish Gaelic folk-lore one often meets with a mixture of Celtic and Scandinavian beliefs and ideas regarding seal-folk, mermaids, water-wives, and so on. But except in a limited area in the Outer Hebrides one never hears mention of the 'Blue Men'—an interesting and significant fact. They are never referred to as 'gods.'

When questioned by one who really has their confidence, modern Hebrideans say with a smile that according to 'the foolish stories of their fathers (ancestors)' the 'Blue Men' are fallen angels. It used to be believed that those angels who, during the 'War in Heaven,' remained neutral, and for that reason were ultimately expelled from the celestial regions, had to find dwellings in the space between the closed doors of Heaven and Hell. One section lives in the northern part of the sky and appears occasionally as the Aurora Borealis; it is composed of two rival clans of 'Nimble Men' (*na fir chlis*) which sometimes dance (as the 'Merry Dancers') and sometimes engage in a 'Battle Royal'; the blood of wounded warriors drips from the sky and may be seen on the red-speckled, dark green stones called 'blood stones.' Another section of the 'fallen angels' is formed by the 'Peace folk' (*sithchean*), or 'fairies' who dwell under green knolls, in the summits of high hills, and inside cliffs. The third section of the angels is known as the 'Blue Men,' and these dwell in the 'Sound of Shiant' and haunt the Shiant Isles. The fact that a mysterious monster seal is supposed to haunt these isles as well, suggests that the 'Blue Men' of folk lore have

acquired the attributes of the old 'sea trows' ('sea trolls') in this area.

The Moorish captives, who were called 'Blue Men,' are not the only historical characters who have been transferred, in the course of time, to the supernatural world. Thomas the Rhymer, who during his lifetime was reputed to have visited the fairy under-world Paradise, had ultimately to return thither and become a 'fairy man.' In Scottish folk-tales, both in Gaelic and in the Doric, he is sometimes visioned as the leader of the 'fairy raid.' He is also one of the sleeping giants under the Eildon hills in the eastern Lowlands, under Dumbuck on the Clyde, and under Tom-na-hurich at Inverness. Even Sir William Wallace has become a giant. The stone-throwing giant of the Eildon hills bears his name and another giant in Argyllshire has been named after him. In the folk-lore of Moray a notorious giant is Alexander Stewart, the notorious son of King Robert II of Scotland, who was nicknamed the 'Wolf of Badenoch.' One of the several Macdonald heroes named 'Donald Gorm' ('Blue Donald') has become a fairy in Ireland. The fairy's prototype was probably the 'Donald Gorm,' Lord of the Isles and Chief of Clan Donald, who in 1545 accompanied the Earl of Lennox to Ireland in connection with a Scottish rebellion. According to a Highland record, 'Macdonald (Donald Gorm) went to Ireland to raise men; but he died on his way to Dublin at Drogheda, of a fever.' Another writer says that 'his funeral in Ireland, to the honour of the Earl of Lennox, stood the King of England in four hundred pounds sterling.' The magnificent interment accorded to the Scots rebel was sufficient to link his memory with fairyland for all time. The liquor consumed would have been an immediate aid in that connection. Withal, the Macdonald chief was a 'Blue Donald'—one of the 'Blue Men.' Perhaps he had Moorish blood in his veins and was a reversion to type. He may have had that 'strange foreign look' which ethnologists occasionally detect in some Hebridean faces. I have myself seen in Lewis dark individuals of decidedly Semitic appearance, and others of very slight build, the males with black 'chin-tuft' beards and other characters recalling those of Dr. Elliot Smith's proto-Egyptians and Iberians. J. F. Campbell, in his 'Popular Tales of the West Highlands,' makes special mention of a type of face which he observed in Barra and which is still to be met with. He writes:

'Behind the fire sat a girl with one of those strange foreign faces which are occasionally to be seen in the Western Isles, a face which

reminded me of the Nineveh sculptures, and of faces seen in St. Sebastian. Her hair was as black as night, and her clear dark eyes glittered through the peat smoke. Her complexion was dark, and her features so unlike those who sat about her, that I asked if she were a native of the island, and learned that she was a Highland girl.'

Dark individuals are common enough in the Hebrides, but this girl was of distinctive type and had evidently had a non-Celtic ancestor. Perhaps the old piratical MacNeils of Barra had purchased or captured some of the Moorish 'Blue Men' and found Hebridean wives for them. That the MacNeils were among those Hebrideans who became allies of the Norse vikings is shown by the occurrence of the family name in Gaelic Niall ('a champion'); in Iceland as in the 'Saga of the Burnt Njal'; in England, one may note, it survives as Nelson and as Nigel.

Some of those ancient vikings with Gaelic surnames wandered as far from home as did the Moorish 'Blue Men.' Indeed, some of their descendants are to be found in our own day on the North African coast, which appears to have been visited in viking times by many adventurers of the type of Ronald's sons Halfdan and Sigfrith. It does not follow, however, that they were merely mercenaries in Norse or Danish vessels. Among the most notorious of the buccaneers, called 'vikings,' were the Gall-Gael (Gall-Gháidhil) or 'Foreign Gaels' who gave their name to Galloway, as Professor W. J. Watson has found, as far back as 852-3. They were of mixed Celtic and Scandinavian descent, and we find them described sometimes as 'Scots and foster-children of the Norsemen.' Some of them ceased to be Christians and became, like the early Norse and Danish vikings, the enemies of the Church and plunderers of its sanctuaries.

Evidence which, I am inclined to consider, indicates that the Gall-Gael, as well as the pure Scandinavian vikings, reached the North African coast, is to be found in a paper read for Mr. R. N. Bradley at a Pan-Celtic congress in Edinburgh about twenty years ago. Mr. Bradley had received from Colonel W. G. Macpherson, of the Army Medical Service, a letter which stated that in 1896 he had met in Morocco a Gaelic-speaking medical missionary who made to him a remarkable statement. It was to the effect that he had discovered in the Sus country (Transatlas) a people who spoke a Gaelic dialect which he could understand. Colonel Macpherson was not surprised at this. He had himself found among the Berber

tribes of North Africa names like 'Bini M'Tir,' 'Bini M'Touga,' and 'Bini M'Ghil.' 'The Bini,' he wrote, 'is simply the Arabic for "children of," and is tacked on by the Arabs to the "M" of the Berbers, which means "sons of" and is exactly the same as the Irish "M" or (Scottish) Gaelic "Mac." Hence the M'Tir, M'Touga, and M'Ghil become in our country (Scotland) the MacTiers, the MacDougalls, and the MacGills.' But Colonel Macpherson overlooks the fact that MacDougall ('son of the Black Stranger or Foreigner') is a surname of Scottish origin. The 'Black Foreigners' were the Danes as the 'White Foreigners' were the Norsemen. Instead of the MacDougall surname having been transferred from North Africa to Scotland, it must have been transferred from Scotland to the Berber area. Probably those who introduced it and other Scots surnames into North Africa were the Gall-Gael vikings who were taken prisoners by the Moors and Berbers. That the surnames of MacDougall, MacTier, and MacGill should be found surviving in North Africa after the lapse of a thousand years is no more remarkable than the survival in a Hebridean place-name and in Hebridean folk-lore of memories of the 'Blue Men' who were taken captive by Ronald's sons in Morocco.

A WANDERER'S SONG.

THERE was a Bay of Naples once : I knew it on a time—
 A sapphire, set in filigree, that swung about in rhyme,
 In tune with all the laughter blown from reckless maidens' lips,
 In tune with all the rise and fall and pulsing of her ships ;
 And pirates, born of pen and ink, went spoiling for a fight,
 And lovers sang, ' Funiculi, Funicula ' by night !

I bent my sail to Naples then, and crammed within the hold
 A cargo full of idle thoughts to barter for her gold.
 I sacked the port of Naples' Bay, and scattered every thought :
 I found her gold was dimmed with sweat, her maidens sold and
 bought,

Her sea was gem of devil's bride—a glinting, evil blue ;
 And now I rake the seas to find the Naples that I knew.

There was an isle of Tenedos : it dreamed in purple seas,
 Ulysses' gusty breath had stirred the topsails of the trees,
 And Sappho's burning flame had mocked the stars ; and in and out
 Of meadows, fringed with asphodel, the fauns had frisked about :
 And swain had danced with shepherdess, and each had heard the
 flute

Of Pan, and known the sylvan god was less than half a brute.

I sailed the seas to Tenedos, to see if I could find
 The print of Aphrodite's foot (some morn when groves are kind) :
 I found a greasy shepherd boy, who rattled on a can :
 I met a pert and flaunting minx, who'd never heard of Pan.
 Oh ! where is lovely Tenedos ? Before I risked my dreams,
 I knew the track of all her groves, the twist of all her streams.

There was a rosy city once, on seven purple hills,
 And names to flout Eternity were echoed in her rills,
 And back and forth across the world her crested eagles sped,
 And every stone was quickened by the stories of her dead ;
 The vestal virgins fed their flames beside a Caesar's home,
 While, bright above the world, there blazed the Glory that was
 Rome.

I found the rosy city there : I compassed all her walls,
And whining beggars showed their wounds beside the Caesar's halls,
While trams and hooting taxis roared and rattled down a street,
That once had echoed to the tramp of gladiators' feet ;
I found a sad and shabby wolf upon Capitoline,
I saw a narrow cage that robbed the eagles of their sheen.

There was a golden Paradise—a throne of chrysoprased,
The good old Masters painted it, in fond believing days ;
All high above the shining streets and gates of pearl there flew
A flock of laughing cherubim, on wings of green and blue :
And, singing o'er the crystal stream, with dart and wheeling rush
Would speed a flight of seraphim, from Botticelli's brush.

There *is* a golden Paradise, where great Archangels stand,
With each a pair of silver wings, and lilies at his hand.
So bright is Michael's swinging sword, and bright is Gabriel's hair,
But, fairer than the hosts of Heaven, stands lovely Azrael fair.
Her bulwarks and her citadels are gay with Mary's flowers :
Oh ! may I find myself in Hell—before I spoil her towers.

BARBARA EUPHAN TODD.

WHERE THERE IS NO TAXATION.

BY LIEUT.-COLONEL P. T. ETHERTON.

LONG and patiently had I been looking for a land where there is no taxation. I have no personal objection to those whose duty it is to collect the revenue, but I hold their office to be one that wages constant warfare on the pockets of the taxpayer. When the Chancellor of the Exchequer joined in still further emptying my coffers I redoubled my energies in the search for a taxless land. At last I have found it, and not far from home, although I have travelled in thirty-eight countries.

This imitation of Arcady lies high up in the Pyrenees, between France and Spain ; it is called Andorra and is the world's oldest and, in population, tiniest republic. When rumours of this Utopia reached me I consulted Cook (not the agitator) as to how to get there ; the clerk said I must be referring to Angora where rabbits come from—or was it Angola, somewhere in the heart of Africa ? I persisted that it was Andorra, and so other clerks came, and together we settled the question by reference to the map. Being determined to penetrate the Andorran fastnesses by motor, I next consulted a famous motoring association, and finally, after many vicissitudes, I crossed the Pyrenees, evaded Spanish military posts, and ran the gauntlet of being shot by sentries who guarded every cross-road and appeared from beneath every bridge, for that part of Spain offering the easiest approach to Andorra is Catalonia, north-west of Barcelona, where revolution is always in the air, and anarchists make it their happy hunting ground.

Landing at St. Malo, we motored south to Biarritz, whence we traversed the Basque country, a race of which the world in general knows scarcely more than the name. The Basques are found in the south-west corner of France and across the border in Spain, and their origin still baffles philologists and historians. Here they have lived since the dawn of history, out of kin with the world beyond, and the world has passed on and left them. The Romans came and defeated but could not subdue them. For centuries they remained aloof and independent, until from policy as much as from necessity they came into line with the governments crystallising

around them. In fact, the Basques on the French side of the Pyrenees only joined the national fold as the result of the Revolution. Their record of independence has created an esteem both racially and with their neighbours; they all regard themselves as of high lineage, and every Basque considers himself *ex-officio* a nobleman, although he never worries about the dignities that go with his descent. Where the MacGregor sits, there is the head of the table, so he does not trouble about the nominal headship.

To reach our objective we crossed many of the highest passes in the Pyrenees and finally came to Ax-les-Thermes, lying immediately north of Andorra. Thence we went south across the Franco-Spanish frontier into Spain, and so to Seo de Urgel, a few miles from the Andorran border.

We were now in touch with the world's oldest and smallest republic, and subsequent acquaintance showed that it has all the glamour of mediaeval days and all the charm of romance. The history of Andorra is full of legend and tradition. It seems to have been created as an independent state—at least as a form of independent state—twelve centuries ago, when Louis the Debonair was fighting the Moors who had swept across Europe to Persia and were spreading the fiery crescent. The Andorrans aided Louis in his struggle with the Moslem host, and in return for their help to France he granted a charter of independence permitting them to govern themselves in their own way. Since 719 they have kept aloof from the world, still retaining a form of rule that is patriarchal.

The area of this midget dominion is approximately 160 square miles, and the population is 5600. You can walk across the country in a day provided the journey is undertaken in summer. In winter it is a different matter, for then deep snow covers the ground and passes and roads are blocked.

Originality greets one at every turn. Even the road by which I entered Andorra was built, so the President told me, amid the weeping and protests of the people, who came out and threw themselves on the ground, and it took much time and patience to partially reconcile them to the new order.

From the Spanish town of Seo de Urgel the road runs up the Gran Valira valley; it twists and turns, and the dust was ten inches deep, whilst there were numerous gullies to cross, some of them blocked by timber. The drive up the ravine to the gateway of Andorra will always be a memorable one, for the gorge is impressive.

There are little rock-girt fields where tobacco is grown—but of what becomes of that tobacco more anon. Presently the gorge widens and the capital is seen perched on a ledge of rock : not a striking place in itself, but there is a majesty about it. The houses are of stone hewn from the mountain side, and amongst them stands out prominently the Parliament building, a massive structure with a square tower. Andorra la Viella, the world's smallest capital—for it totals only 164 houses—looks as if it had grown up with the mountains.

We had diplomatic introductions from the French Government to the President, and at the capital were asked to go on to Encamp, where the head of the state resides. This we did, guiding the car between houses and through passages so narrow, bumpy, and rock-strewn that I marvel how we did it. As the date of our arrival was uncertain, the President had gone on a tour of his flocks and herds, for this mediæval potentate is a peasant first and a statesman afterwards. At Encamp we were met by his brother-in-law, Señor Benito Mas, who keeps a hostelry and café for the peasantry and for travellers passing through. There we were hospitably entertained, and the next morning, in response to a message, the chief of the republic came in.

President Père Font Altimir is a man of fifty-five, tall, with a rugged and genial type of feature that reveals the strong character. He greeted us with an easy courtesy betokening pride of place and birth, such as one might expect from the head of a patriarchal government admitting no social distinctions. Andorra is a democratic yet feudal nation, an aristocracy and yet a republic, under the joint suzerainty of France and Spain, a state that is the political paradox of the world.

Following the introductions we were entertained at luncheon and carried on an animated conversation. Although the questions were numerous and perhaps a little searching, the President answered them with wonderful lucidity ; indeed, I could not help reflecting, How many prime ministers and heads of great governments could give so concise and yet comprehensive an account of the systems under which they act ? President Père Font did it uncommonly well, and the information he imparted was full and fascinating. He is a progressive, but must perforce move slowly among a people full of suspicion, who cling to the theory of splendid isolation and are distrustful of exploiters. On various occasions the vanguard of modern innovation has endeavoured to penetrate

the Andorran fastnesses—a risky undertaking, for the Andorrans are conservative and cherish all those modes of life and thought the origin of which must be sought far back in the mists of antiquity.

Some years ago a syndicate contemplated the building of a gambling saloon in the centre of this quiet land, but the Andorrans would have none of it and the promoters fled in dismay. There are no newspapers or journals in the state. 'Two foreigners wanted to start a newspaper here a few years back,' said the President, 'but'—and he smiled broadly—'my people chased them out of the country, and that was the end of the newspaper venture.'

From their attitude towards the prospector and the journalist it might be supposed that the Andorrans are aggressive; on the contrary, they are peaceably inclined and there is neither army nor police, and kinemas, theatres, railways, post offices, or cabarets, are unknown in this quaint little state. Best of all, Andorra has no taxation, and law, in the sense of a written code, is also unknown, so there is nothing for the lawyers to wrangle over.

For defence the state looks to its citizens, and every man from the age of eighteen is ready when called upon. Each must possess a gun and a few cartridges and fire one shot annually at a target in his particular village. That is the extent of Andorra's warlike tendencies.

In the afternoon we visited the President at the 'White House,' a plain two-storied cottage with quaint balconies, the railings of which were fashioned from iron cast and moulded in the state. I drove my car through the narrow and stony lane leading to the official residence, but we were finally obliged to proceed on foot by a steep alleyway leading up to the doorway. There the daughter met us, and we followed her up a wooden stairway to a plain square room where the President's wife received us with ease and charm.

The floor was bare, but the whole interior was clean and orderly and there was an air of quiet dignity. After a few minutes' conversation our hostess went out and brought in wine and cakes—we did not see a servant in the place, and we realised that life in Andorra is marked by simplicity and faithful endurance.

After the simple and unconventional meal we adjourned to the garden, access to which was disputed by a herd of pigs until the daughter enclosed them in their sty, and then a row of beehives was commended to us as the President's especial care.

Hard by the Presidential residence is an ancient chapel and

clock tower ; the latter leans at a dangerous angle like its prototype at Pisa, and the story of the chapel takes us back to the Norman Conquest. It is partly surrounded by a low stone wall, and seated on it we listened to the President giving his views on international politics. He doubted the practical value of the League of Nations, but thought that Geneva must be a nice place where the delegates could enjoy themselves ; incidentally, he himself had never been beyond the confines of the state. He and his people rest content in their surroundings, and heed not the passing of empires and the onward march of progress.

Before leaving we were shown a letter from President Wilson, in which the greetings of the greatest republic were conveyed to the smallest, but a signed photograph sent by the American chief never reached its destination, for Andorran postal arrangements are crude and there is no service of posts and telegraphs. Two men leave the state now and then, one for France and the other for Spain ; they bring back such letters as there may be addressed to residents. Probably the photograph was lost in transit.

In the capital we were entertained at a banquet in Andorran style given by the President and the members of his Council. I drove him there through streets so narrow that not even a man could pass the car except at widened points. On the way I pulled up once or twice to enable him to discuss affairs of state with citizens who were busy at the plough and the loom, or hoeing their tobacco fields. They did not look too favourably at this new mode of progression, but the President naively remarked that it was a wonderful change from mules and walking.

The Parliament House, or 'Palace' as the Andorrans love to call it, is a curious mixture of business and pleasure. It is of two stories, the ground floor being utilised as stables to house the Councillors' mules, whilst on the one above is the dining room and Council Chamber with benches both long and hard. These, with a few chairs carved out of local timber, and an oil lamp or two, complete the furniture of Andorra's Parliament Chamber. Adjacent to it is the gigantic kitchen with fire-dogs large enough to roast an entire ox, the Andorrans holding that a good meal is essential to the framing of laws. The kitchen is original, for it has neither cook nor scullion ; the Councillors take their turn at the preparation of the dinner, which they regard as a pleasant interlude from the affairs of state.

In the Council Chamber, where the destinies of the state are decided, is an oak chest containing the archives. It has six locks,

and each of the six leading Councillors holds a key, so that the safe can only be opened when all are present.

The President receives an annual salary of approximately £3, and each member of the Council 15s. a year, while the Secretary-General, who does all the spade work, draws the equivalent of 10s. a week. There is little or no crime, a police force does not exist, and the last occasion on which an Andorran was executed was forty-six years ago. Curiously enough the garrotte by which the criminal was strangled was lying in the chapel adjoining the Council Chamber.

The life of the people is pastoral, with many quaint superstitions and beliefs. Every inch of available ground is cultivated, and each field must have its sprig of cypress planted in one corner, after being duly blessed by the priest, so that evil spirits and influence may be warded off and all go well with the crops. If he wishes to marry happily the Andorran has only to repair to the church tower at midnight on June 24, with an egg which he must cut in half exactly at the hour, and his desire will be gratified.

The Andorrans drink long and copiously from leathern bottles in exactly the same way as the Jewish patriarchs and their nomadic forebears did centuries before them—only with this exception, that the Andorrans hold the bottle a few inches from the mouth and allow the wine of the country to pour in. This makes cups and glasses unnecessary, for all drink from the same bottle and one suffices for a family.

Tobacco is the chief product of the state, it being prepared and smuggled across the frontiers into France and Spain, and the Andorran will have touched the high-water mark of standing amongst his fellows only when he has won his spurs in the smuggling ring. The initial stage is the cultivation of tobacco: the preparation of the soil, and tending the plant through the various phases of its growth, until it reaches maturity and is ready for harvesting. Then follows the transformation of the weed into cigars and for use with a pipe: how to roll it, and present the article in its most attractive form. The method of curing is crude but none the less efficient, and during the season the railings of the quaint balconies of every house are covered with large bunches of the leaves hanging out to be cured in the sun. The resultant article is highly creditable to the makers, and of the Andorran cigars we smoked—they were mostly given us by the chief of the smugglers himself—we did not find one that would not have earned praise in a London restaurant.

Finally, the Andorran boy accustoms himself to the carrying of heavy loads by devious mountain paths, and over high and unfrequented passes which only expert cragsmen can tackle.

The frontier is supposed to be patrolled by the guards, but their number is insufficient, and friendly fog, snow, and mist often come to the aid of the Andorran, who is just as much at home in them as he is on the clearest day. All sorts of subterfuges are adopted to run the cargoes across the frontiers. Lumbering ox carts wending their way into sunny Spain may be of curious construction, and who knows what those innocent-looking bundles of hay, or sacks of corn, may not contain ?

Many and varied are the wiles and stratagems of these cheery law-breakers, and many the stories they can tell of encounters with the revenue authorities. One of the old stagers recently feigned lameness when meeting a customs official on the wrong side of the frontier ; the dauntless smuggler put down his load, which had all the appearance of a freshly killed sheep, but the head at one end and the hind feet at the other were all the load contained of the sheep. The interior was tobacco of the best brand which you could not have bought for a ten-pound note. The guard was not only unsuspecting, but took compassion on the poor man and carried his load a mile and a quarter down the hill, until the going was more suitable for one so lame ! Then the lame man took up his load again, thanked the obliging guard and trudged on.

We left Andorra with regret, this home of equality and simplicity, with its guardian mountains and spirit of an ancient state, free as the heights that enclose it and the winds that blow over them. Andorra still lives in the Middle Ages ; there you have the simple life, there are no agitators, and when new ideas have been mooted the inhabitants have risen like lions disturbed from their slumbers and chased the offenders beyond the frontier. One cannot imagine anything more perfect ; you can smoke the principal product of the country at peace in your chair, and open a threatening-looking letter without a tremor—but, personally, I should miss my morning paper. There is always something to mar the outlook.

LACY'S ANSWER.

A STORY OF THE ESSEX CONSPIRACY.

BY THE CONTESSI DE CHAMBRUN.

'... Mr. Lacy the actor, the man now living who knows the most about Shakespeare and Jonson: Query his address from Mr. Beeston.'—AUBREY'S 'Brief Lives.'

You ask me, Respected Sir, to furnish forth some account of the happenings which cost my beloved patron's life, placed many a tall fellow's neck in jeopardy, and wherein miscarried our Mr. Shakespeare's endeavour to wrest the liberties of England from the senile despotism of a Queen of Shrews.

True it is what Mr. Beeston says, no man lives to-day that remembreth like old William Lacy these times of blood and peril, so Sir, since I have your assurance that such arcana as you collect are not yet to be given to the public view, I can see no harm in setting down for your private edification what mine eye hath witnessed and which is recorded on those Mind-Tablets which must endure until this mortal structure crumbles and yields its part to razed oblivion.

Ere these secrets be ripe for telling, their author and those persons of whom he speaks (like medlars) should be rotten. But if they are serviceable to your work (and I doubt not that truth is ever needful for the advancement of learning) take from me this true tale of my master's woeful death, together with the account of what led to the final tragedy.

Few knew the veritable reasons why the Earl my patron's scheme miscarried, and though among the number there was one of the tongue-wagging sex, my lady Southampton was unlike her sex in this, a very pattern of discretion and a gentlewoman, in my opinion, at every point most rare and virtuous.

You shall hear the part she played in saving our Will, and must love her, as I do, for the rare dissembling, which, though it came near to break his heart, saved his great work to adorn this and all succeeding ages.

Concerning the happenings of that fateful evening, Lady Southampton and His Lordship kept their own counsel, and there remains alive but I myself that am competent to speak of these

affairs. At your request then, I sit me down on this my six and eightieth birthday to chain the fickle jade memory and reveal the effects which sprang from seldom-suspected causes.

Thanks be to God, I am able as ever I was to repeat any of my parts without book, or to supply—as I did thirty years since from memory—many lost leaves and blanks from our prompt-books such time as my fellow Mr. Condell was compiling his edition of our plays for Mr. Jaggard. The fair copy of many was lost in the fire which destroyed the Globe as you must have heard tell, and it was by getting together the surviving actors and going over their cues, under my supervision, that he made out certain scenes.

Yes, Sir, I could acquit myself of any personage in Will's dramas, letter-perfect, save only those wherein, being little, I took a child's part (as in *Andronicus*).¹

Neither know I *Troilus*, that sly roguery, nor yet *Timon*, the only portion of Will's work unworthy of his mighty pen. I speak not of the *Prince of Tyre*, for Will therein had but little hand, having taken over the piece for redoing when he was but young in art; moreover the three scenes which are surely his leave nothing behind of his best manner, and the person of Marina is as fairly drawn as any of his women. . . .²

But I begin to ramble from my subject much like a doting old man. Let it enforce the lesson to transcribe from those brain-tables of which I spoke, while they still remain full-charactered and before Death blots out all.

Come we then to the theme of this discourse, even the 'Lamentable Tragedy of King Richard Second,' the failure of which caused the death of the Great Earl (may he dwell in Heavenly Bliss) and brought such grievous woes on England. Never can I think of those days, nor of my beloved master, without bitter drops.

The play of *Richard II*, as it now stands in print, had been given two years before with notable success, Will himself, in the kingly title, drawing tears from stones by his saying of the lines 'With my own hands I give away my crown.' But at the time of which I now

¹ This being the case, the reader may think it strange that Lacy's name should not figure on the list of the principal actors who figured in all Shakespeare's works as set down in the 1623 folio. The explanation is that Lacy himself was not, strictly speaking, a *principal* actor—what the French denominate *chef de rôle*—but rather a general understudy for all the parts.

² See Rowe's and Dryden's accounts of the probable date of *Pericles* as compared to Sir Sidney Lee's theory of a late composition; also *Shakespeare, Actor-Poet*, by Clara Longworth de Chambrun (D. Appleton & Co.).

write he had made the tragedy clean over (at Mr. Merrick's wish)¹ and the subject was presented, as it were, from another point of view. To this end the parts were quite altered. Will was to play Henry in the coming performance and I Richard,—which sovereign was drawn expressly more a weakling, in order that the audience, stirred to indignation, might strike for the liberties of England at my Lord Essex' rousing summons.

For this purpose the piece was rewrit, and all the players' words designed to move the spectators against the tyrannies of that most unchaste Cynthia and her persecutions against our beloved patron, victim of base jealousy and black-hearted treason. Our plans were laid so that in public squares and open fields the actors should harangue the populace till, at a given signal, the riot should begin, and My Lord, riding forth mid a chosen band, should place himself at the head of the multitude and march against the Tower, where, lieutenant and defences being seized, we should lay hands on the Queen's person (meaning not her death, of which my lord was falsely accused, but with intent of forcing her abdication in favour of the King of Scots).

Our Fellows were all sweating to learn their parts in the new piece, which, breathing as it did the most eloquent love of country, sacred indignation against notorious tyranny and wrong, was most fitting to our purpose. Will himself never worked quicker nor better than during that last sennight. *Richard* surpassed all that had gone before him, just as *Henry* topped all his previous performances. Never was there man or woman, not born deaf or sand-blind, who could have looked unmoved on Will's rendering of his patriot king. His Brutus—of late so justly admired—fell far short of this great personage of King Bolingbroke, moved by the very spirit of pure justice.

The dangers in which every man knew himself to stand lent edge to the performance. Our preparations went forward in deepest secrecy; each learned his part by rote and not by book, so that the dangers of so perilous a venture should not be increased by loose leaves and vendible writings in the hands of some careless player. As for the authorisation to act, it was already got in the name of the well-known 'Tragedy of Richard second as sundrie times acted by the Lord Chamberlain his servants,' and it would have been so much

¹ Bacon's pamphlet on the *Treason of the late Earl of Essex* and the deposition of Augustine Philipps of Shakespeare's company concerning the performance of *Richard II* tell the same story. Merrick was Lord Essex' political secretary.

as a man's life was worth to hint at any change in our present version from that already viewed by Londoners some months since.

Alas, save the players themselves, Lord Percy, Lord Monteagle and other Essex men, present at the last rehearsals, none saw Will's greatest tragedy, which, to his other work, was what *Othello* is to *Timon* !

We were mighty set up with the success of our endeavours ; Will and Hemings had outdone themselves, and I had figured no mean third in the galaxy.

Burbage he was to ride at Essex' elbow, and harangue the multitude till the procession, gathering strength and numbers, reached the fields where, on a great scaffold, our Will, who could so powerfully stir men's hearts, was to jump on a led horse, richly caparisoned, and, himself in royal robes, figure pro-rege to the populace, the unknown person of the King of Scots. This was My Lord Southampton's idea, and the ruse was necessary, for beside that the Prince's favour suffered not in the exchange (our Will being a handsome, personable man, James Stewart but puny in body).—'Tis said that his mother's terror before his birth when she saw her favorite David Richie torn to pieces before her very eyes, caused this son to fear and hate a crowd and not to stomach the sight of a drawn blade. Therefore Will was to replace the monarch in the hurly-burly, while the real King remained safely in the north until the Queen might be disposed of. Then only should he claim his place at Westminster.

Those who knew Shakespeare best aver that he was excellent in his player's quality, and even his enemies have writ that no man was more zealous in his art. Ever aspiring to see the stage more than a passive reflexion of the times, he strove with all his might, on this occasion, to make his drama shape the destinies of England. During those last few days he trod as if on air, confident of success and proud as never before of his calling. Never, sure, had he so adorned it. Like a sovereign he moved among his fellows in this his great character of Henry, and, as a modern poet said,—was it Weever or Davies ?—might well have been fellow to any monarch. Even sour-tongued Ben, who could not bear to hear Will praised when living, nor let pass an occasion of a prologue without venting his jealous spleen, hath said as much as a friend could of Shakespeare's talent. But we all remember his scandalous attack in *Bartholomew Fair*, wherein he spoke so scornful as to say that he (Ben) desired no man's praise who was ignorant enough to

praise Shakespeare, and flung *his flouts* at the *Tempest* itself. But let that pass, for Ben was ever (to my thinking) a scurvy knave; and so back to our argument.

That man who saw not Shakespeare in this part (and truly there were not more than half a score who did) might think that Burbage was the better tragedian. I have also heard that the verdict of playgoers would never admit *Richard II* to be the finest of his histories. This may be true of the accepted version which is now in print. I have piously preserved our play, and pray God that an editor may some day be found to show with what marvellous ease and subtlety the characters, already so living-true, were transmuted till the spectator's mind came shifting round like a weather-vane and his sympathy set full-face from Richard toward that heroic figure of Henry. Well, suffice it to say, all was prepared and ordered for success, and, save for black treachery, success would, I doubt not, have crowned this noble hazard, for who could resist the fiery appeal, made at a moment when Will's mighty verse had so powerfully stirred men's minds, if our play had actually come to its presentation?

By what means that base pettifogging lawyer got wind of secret doings at the Globe, and set his sharp nose to scent mischief brewing, I never learned—some fancy that old Ben played tell-tale, for he was mighty consumed (as I have before hinted) with jealous spite, and had but recently quit our fellowship. Moreover he was getting over-familiar in high places, seeking advancement where it could be easiest come by, and what better way than a sly word in the ear of a learned counsel who sought preferment to his friend's undoing?

Be this as it may, unconscious of the menace that was in store for us, we had come to our last rehearsal, and all was ready for that great stage which was set for the morrow's doings. Will and I were making our way through the dark lane which led from the playhouse to his lodging, hard by, when I took note of a person observing us narrowly. Indeed the link-boy who went before thrust his torch so rudely in our faces that I was about to cuff the rascal for his pains, when she whom he lighted intervened betwixt us, saying in a voice passing sweet—'Nay, be not angered, good fellow, London nights are dark to distinguish friend from foe; the broad sun himself is not clear enough in these perilous times to show us our enemies! But indeed I believe that you be friends, and would prove the like to you.'

I misdoubted some madcap prank, some maid-of-honour frolic,

when I heard how the lady clipt her words spruce and clean like those of the court, and I wondered whether one of those light wenches, Mistress Fytton or black-avised Bess Russell, had taken it in mind to visit the players' demesnes for sport. Truly no dame of good repute would venture, so accompanied, in Southwark, and I suddenly felt assured that despite her regal manner this was but some she-gosling of my Lord Winchester's flock.¹

Our Will (as all know) was a handsome, well-shaped man, with much sweetness in his manners, and a wonderful taking way with women, but his tastes led him rather to sobriety in this respect, and many a time would he feign sick rather than join in a debauch of the town.

Perhaps our fine gentleman was too proud to deem himself greatly praised by the favours of a light wench, and I expected to see him now start to walk on the faster when this damsel accosted him with so great boldness. Thinking to fall in with his wishes I gave her a sharp word.

'We seek neither your kindness nor yet your enmity, fair Mistress, but only to go our ways in peace! There be many, hereabouts in Southwark, who follow a neat ankle and a bright eye—but we are not of that confession, so carry thy torch and wares to another market.'

I was for passing on, having said my say out, but Will, who never mistook real gentility, albeit in draggled ruff and farthingale, bespoke the lady like a queen.

'When each man's hand is lifted against his neighbour, friendship comes in fairest guise. My sword and service are at your call, fair Mistress, when it please you to command them.'

'I thank thee, Master Shakespeare,' said the sweet voice, as we both started in surprise. 'Indeed I expected no less. But the favour I have to beg cannot be spoken in open street. Please you lead on to your lodging, or better, send forward this good fellow here, to seek some reputable tavern outside your own familiar haunts. My affairs crave secrecy and despatch.'

Will spoke quickly.

'I have but lately taken lodging, hard by, with foreign folk newly come to England. They reckon little of our doings. My host, one Montjoye, a man of sober condition among the French, is quiet and seemly and will blab naught that he hears, seeing that he comprehends it not.'

¹ 'Winchester goose,' popular term for women of light repute on account of their being under the legal jurisdiction of the Bishop of Winchester's ecclesiastical court.

This was indeed true, and herein lay the meat of many a dis-sension between our Will and me. He did ever take delight in wasting time with foreigners, sought the company of that sleek schoolmaster with his ferret face, resolute John Florentine,¹ and now this same Montjoye, his landlord, through whom he portrayed some of the humours of his Dr. Caius, as erstwhile he had shown the pedant Florio in divers comedies.

He must have had a kind of guess that I liked not to flock with birds of that feather, for never did he ask me to share his new lodging or mingle with his French gentry or papist folk—frocked or unfrocked. I have ever been—I praise God!—a bitter foe to popery and like fanaticism, but I have sometimes thought our Will had some slight weaknesses himself, and was perhaps but a lukewarm enemy to the old gentleman across the Alps.²

We wended our way gropingly, speaking in whispers, and I, for one, mighty ill at ease. For, after that kind of upliftment which warms a player's heart when the piece on trial goeth well, comes betimes a sinking of the spirit, which seizes on a man's inside like a foreboding of danger, or the fear of sudden death.

Once across the threshold, I double-barred the door and waited transfixed to hear this great lady—for that she was and no mistake. A man could not act Will's plays and fail to know a Portia, a Desdemona or a Helena when such an one confronted him in the flesh, with all the sweet womanliness which our poet could so well describe, and more, that which none but him hath ever mastered, that heroic manliness which hath made his women different from all other creations of the stage.

In looking on the clear brave eyes I thought of Will's own phrase, 'A true and faithful lover to her Lord.' Yet something told me that she had been discrowned of love's great dower, much as those whom I had thought on. There was a steadfast sadness in their depths which belied the light tone in which she spoke.

'None knoweth better than she who stands before you, Master Shakespeare, how much cause of forgiveness dwells in my Harry! and yet . . . 'tis in Hal's own name that I come to crave a boon . . . in his name and in that of the old affection you bore him—if it still dwell in your remembrance. . . .'

¹ John Florio's rôle as the dramatist's living dictionary is described in *Shakespeare, Actor-Poet* (D. Appleton & Co.).

² According to the Corpus Christi manuscript 'Shakespeare died a Papist.'

Will made a sign of assent—I think he could not speak—for since the quarrel which had estranged him from My Lord Southampton, none of us had dared to mention ‘that sweet beloved name’ of his first patron.

‘Master Shakespeare,’ she continued, unmindful of his blenching, ‘this night Harry is in sore straits and seeketh in vain for what he can no longer count on . . . a true friend. . . . Such a one as erstwhile was his poet . . . before the love that was between them suffered accident. . . .’

Methought she used the words with intention; certain it is that Will’s lines flashed through my head, and sure I am that he was mindful of them too :

‘Our love was builded far from accident,
It suffers not in smiling pomp, nor falls
Beneath the blows of thrall’d discontent,
To which the inviting time our fashion calls.’

I did not catch Will’s low reply, but methought I heard thus much of the final phrase : . . . ‘Harry’s self cannot undo. . . .’

‘Ah!’ she exclaimed, ‘I counted on that very word. Swear to me that you will this night serve Harry as of old, with all the best that is in you!’ And he answered, ‘It is sworn.’

‘Then you shall hear a strange thing. . . . On this night, of all others, in the triumph of your inspiration—I say—in *Harry’s name leave all!* Ride incontinent from London : take the byeways toward Wilton, where you shall meet the Scottish envoys and warn them. There is a new part that you must play in this, our living English drama . . . and one which craves haste and immediate decision.’

Will had grown pale at her words, but he answered very steady. ‘It is quite impossible, not to be thought on! The very kernel and pith of all lies in the person of King Henry. . . . None other knoweth the lines, none other could act them . . . my part must be played in London to-morrow.’

She spoke waywardly, like one unused to be crossed.

‘Nay, since you have sworn! and since I tell thee it *must be* as I say!—Burbage shall act the part, and do it to perfection.’

‘Dick Burbage!’ cried Shakespeare, and, forgetting himself a moment, he spoke with the innate sincerity of the born actor. ‘Dick would make a botch of my part and mar all with his rant and bombast!’

I did almost laugh aloud to hear him serve the London idol so! Dick Burbage, that could do no wrong! But Will had ever been mannerly in his playing, and judged Burbage too loud in his passion. Once indeed he thought to tame it by the quaint conceit which took so well with the pit: that of giving the actor a lesson on his faults, by his own word of mouth, and in public,—I mean when the Prince doth warn the player against all those faults so dear to Dick himself, and Burbage relished the jest, albeit the butt of it, nor did the quip lose savour through his repetition—a thing ever becoming in a good wit. . . .

Meantime the lady waved her hand impatient-like.

'Made or marred, the play must e'en go forward without you. Master Shakespeare . . . there is no other way. There lives never a man his Lordship would trust but you. He needeth a man fearless, and tall of his hands, one that can learn his page by rote and keep no paper which, if found, would hang himself and the rest to boot. One that can find his way by devious paths at night time, who can play many parts, and judge if his fellows play false or true. Who can smell a lie tho' the King's self speak it. . . . Such a man must we have to carry my lord's life-and-death errand to the King of Scots' envoys, and where shall we, in all England, and before to-morrow, find such another?'

Then she told us how solicitor Bacon had got wind of the work toward, and had set about to circumvent our schemes. How he was coming betimes on the morrow, with charge of treason ready writ, to demand the Globe's papers and prompt-book, enough, God wot, to hang every man-Jack of us. All papers, she said, that contained mischief towards the Queen must be hid that very night, the playbooks and other documents safely bestowed in a sure place. There was nothing for it but that I should hie me back to the Globe, lay hands on the coffers and carry them to some trusty friend, to Sidney at Flushing or Neville in Paris, who were secretly of our faction. Her ladyship hit on Dick Longworth for this job, knowing him to be a silent studious reader in Gray's-Inn, and not one to rouse suspicion. But Shakespeare, who lodged hard by to this Longworth, bethought him that he had latterly gone down to his folk at Dammary Court.¹ Thereat our plan seemed at tide water until Will suggested another good man for the job, Mr. Brewster, Sir William Davies' secretary, who went often between our friends

¹ See note on Lancelot and Richard Longworth of Dammary Court, *Athenae Oxonienses*.

in Holland, the better that being in school in Leyden he passed out of the country without suspicion.

Whether it was veritably this man took the papers or no, I cannot say with any surety. After the miscarriage of our plot it was reported that Brewster went his way mighty sorrowful into the Low Countries and thence set sail for the New World. But nothing further was heard either of ship or companions.¹

I left Will and the lady wonderful set on carrying this enterprise to a happy issue, saw her hand him a sealed packet with cross and gulls, and knew that she was Hal's wife indeed. Holding up her finger, a pretty gesture all her own—

'To Wilton, haste-post-haste! Trust not Rowland Whyte, but place the missive in Will Herbert's own hand: these be doings for master, not for man! The instructions he gives you thereupon follow to the letter—no matter how incongruous they may appear.'

Then placed she on his neck, he kneeling, a golden chain with Harry's picture in little, speaking much to this purport the while—

'Let bygones be as bygones! and love my poor Hal! He hath need of his true friends, Master Shakespeare, and is not likely to find any such, save in these two servants, here present—even thee and me! Thou—to whom he has scant kindness. . . . Nevertheless I believe we be both his faithful lovers, forever, ay—and afterwards. So farewell, Master Shakespeare, for Harry's sake! and God speed your errand.'

Thus it came that when morn broke over London town the new Bolingbroke was seven leagues thence, little thinking, as he galloped westward, that he was embarked on a wild-goose chase to save a king that was in no present danger, but that it was Will Shakespeare's own neck that his well-wishers thus caused to 'scape the halter. Nor would he, had he divined the subterfuge, have thanked them for such zeal in his affairs.

True it is that Harry Southampton, in care for the player's life, was prouder of his poet's verse than scrupulous of wounding a friend's sensitive pride. The young Lord laughed oftentimes at what he termed 'an actor's fine talk of his Gentleman's honour'—never understanding that Will would have died a hundred deaths rather than suffer smirch—that his fair name should be so blackened

¹ Lacy seems here at fault, in ignoring the record of Elder Brewster and his venturesome *Mayflower*. Colour is, however, given to the story by the fact that Brewster was not originally a Puritan but a Church of England man, who threw in his lot for political reasons with malcontents.

by an assured well-wisher was more than he could brook, and thence, as I take it, that misunderstanding which is set forth so crystal clear in Shakespeare's sonnets grew and deepened.

We, that witnessed the dolorous happenings which caused England's best blood to flow, can only bless Southampton for saving Will and his immortal works from the ruin which awaited his own and the conspirators' fortunes.

At dawn the Queen was to have been surprised in her palace, the issues of which were guarded by a hundred devoted partisans, Sir John Davies, Sir Christopher Blount and Sir Charles Danvers at their head. Meantime Essex, carried from Essex House by Southampton and his volunteers, would have got easy access to her Majesty, doubting not to obtain the revocation of the ministers in Spanish pay.

But alas! the treason of Ferdinando Gorge set the palace all alert erecting triple barriers. Force, not surprise, became necessary to gain access to the Queen. And one short moment force triumphed. Essex and Southampton marched unresisted through the city to Westminster, the armourers joining them to a man and furnishing the band with pikes and muskets.

But at the palace they encountered a veritable army backed by cannon, and finally, abandoned by their weary troops, the leaders were driven to parley, and passed to trial under promise of a fair and impartial hearing.

But the trial, a very parody of justice, was a foregone conclusion. The favorite's life imperilled that of the ministers.

Essex, acting as his own lawyer, eloquently invoked the right of any English freeman to challenge a jury composed of his bitter personal enemies with six earls and fifteen barons, such as Derby, Nottingham and Cobham together. This appeal was iniquitously denied under pretext that 'men of such quality' having once sworn on their honour to judge impartially would rather die than break their oath.

The Earl answered extempore with such assured countenance that his accusers were reduced to stammering silence. 'I do not speak to save my life, but to defend my honour, too long defamed by the atheists and caterpillars of the commonwealth sitting among ye! who, with tortuous lies and filthy chicanery, have played for this head of mine. Could I but die in fair fight against them and thereby end their pernicious careers, I had been happy, knowing that I had done God, my Prince and my country signal service.'

Southampton in his duello with Mr. Attorney Bacon gained the sympathy of all present, counting on the justice of his cause to gain a hearing. He had not unsheathed his sword or armed his followers in his march to the palace. 'That was a ruse!' cried Bacon. 'A trick commonly practised by traitors; like the Duke de Guise in Paris, you placed your hope in the affection of the tradesmen to aid you and your partisans.'

Southampton eloquently denied that any violence had ever been intended toward her Majesty.

'Another ruse,' cried Bacon. 'Traitors were always wont to strike at a sovereign obliquely, through their ministers! Full premeditation of your horrid crime was proved, when, after dining at Gunther's, you took wherry to the Globe over the water, and, in company with those who were at your side in the outbreak, regaled yourselves with the play of the deposing of Richard of Bordeaux, a tragedy you hoped soon to transport from stage to state.'

Hereupon entered the moving spirit in Essex' ruin, Mr. Secretary Cecil, who, having prepared his part during three years, now thundered a torrent of abuse against the two Earls, demanding for them the same fate that had been meted out to their follower Captain Lee. That is, heart and entrails torn forth and consumed in a bonfire lighted a-purpose before the victim's face, the body then quartered and exposed, the head on Temple-bar, the more ignoble parts on London-bridge.

Mr. Secretary had not forgotten his ill-augured hump, which never showed to better advantage; he licked his lips as he made his cruel speech, and many ladies present fainted at sight of his tigerish bloodthirstiness.

'Better Richard Second than Richard Third, thou crook-back,' was heard said among the spectators, and there was a great stir.

The solemnity of the session was further dishonoured by the conduct of the peers, who, while the case was a-hearing, caused great platters of conserves and flagons of beer to be set out in open court, stuffing themselves therewith, as though they had not seen food for days. Taking also many pipes of tobacco, until well soused and drunk on noxious fumes, they gave their verdict against the accused.

My Lord Essex received sentence as contentedly as though asked to dance with the Queen, and only showed emotion when the like was read for young Southampton and the axe's head turned in his

direction,—then indeed he made appeal to Cecil, declaring that he alone was responsible for what had been done, that his followers acted out of pure love to himself, and not in hatred of Her Majesty's injustice. He begged the peers to reconsider their verdict, and spare for his country's service one so ready and capable to do her honour in court and camp, by land and sea. Then, although the court was moved to tears, it rose, and Rally,¹ Captain of the Guard, conducted the prisoners back to the Tower.

The sole grace the Queen gave my noble patron, was to order his head struck from his shoulders. This was done accordingly on a scaffold set up for the purpose, where he appeared in a gown of wrought velvet, and satin suit, all black, with little ruff-band, before the Earls of Cumberland and Hertford, and Sir John Peyton, lieutenant of the Tower.

The Chaplain exhorted him to repent of what he was accused of, to wit : favouring papacy in the realm. The Earl responded with mildness that although neither atheist nor papist unless it were so to declare that he hoped for salvation through the mercy of our Saviour Jesus Christ, he had never been one to understand that any free-born citizen should be made to suffer in the matter of faith and conscience. Exhorted to pray for the Queen, he said, turning his eyes heavenward, ' May God give her an understanding heart,' and repeated the fourth psalm, then, kneeling, bowed his head and fitted it to the block. The executioner, being much moved, struck aslant, then in the midst of the sentence, ' Jesu, receive my soul,' severed the head at three blows, the second, thank God ! depriving him of all sense and feeling.

Thus was accomplished the sin which that Royal Jezebel must answer before the eternal recorder. Nor was the man she had loved ten years her only victim ; Sir Kit Blount, finest gentleman among the papists, and handsome Charles Danvers, beloved of Wiltshire poets, perished at the block, and scores of humbler folk, printers, book-sellers, and Madam Lane—who had housed a priest in illness—at Tyburn gibbet.

But these executions came near costing the hangman his life ; an excited mob filled the streets crying out on the Queen's injustice, and to escape being flogged like the headsman, Bacon and Raleigh hid theirs in a secret place.

The Queen at last understood that too much blood had been set flowing to set a Spaniard on our throne (which Will Cecil was paid to do), and pardoning Lord Rutland—held too light fantastic

¹ Meaning, of course, Walter Raleigh.

and glib of tongue to have been privy to grave secrets—she likewise commuted into perpetual imprisonment the ferocious doom pronounced against Harry Southampton.

No need to tell you, Sir, of the sudden turn of fortune's wheel which brought young Hal back to the summit of her favours, and how his poet too triumphed at court,—Chief of the King's Own Players. How Bacon grovelled for pardon, and how the worshipful Southampton after years of waiting sat himself as judge in the High Court which condemned the Chancellor for gross abuse of state functions and malversation.

But you will be still wondering, as I often did myself, what were the contents of the packet which Lady Bess Southampton set such store by that she deemed no man but Will Shakespeare trustworthy of so portentous a message. Truly my own curiosity pinched me sharply in this matter and, happening to ask myself what person among Shakespeare's friends would be most likely to unknot the dilemma, bethought me of John the Oxford vintner, and, before setting me down to ask the question in writing, argued it thus, *in petto* with myself :

'The old pea-cock, in whose house Shakespeare baited on his yearly journeys into Warwickshire, who prides himself so much on the friendship of playwrights and fine young nobles, misdoubts no whit that it was his fair Dame Pint-Pot, Nan Davenant, they came to woo at the Golden Cross. Beshrew me if it would not be good sport to send him to inquire of this same witty, wise and gentle spouse of his,—who with her dark eyes spied so deep into the poet's secrets,—an explanation of the mystery.'

And sure enough when the next post came down from Oxford, what should I find in answer to my queries, but a packet, crossed and re-crossed with good John's pot-hooks and hangers,—for he wrote fine Roman script. The letter was filled with the humours of the tavern, overflowing too with pride over the poetic talents of that young cuckoo-egg, William, his son. I laughed aloud in reading, and repeated at every line, 'Man, know thyself for what thou art.' For you may remember the verses since printed upon young Davenant's writing his name with an apostrophe :

'As several cities made their claim
Of Homer's birth, to have the fame,
So, after ages will not want
Towns claiming to be *Avenant*.
Great doubt there is where now it lies,
Whether in Lombard or the skies.

Some say by Avenant New-Place is meant,
 And that this Norman is without descent
 Other than Conqueror's laurels. Never mind.
 They only are deformed who are unkind.'

But it is not in my intention, Sir, to quote the old man's dotage *in extenso* nor make a critique thereon in Apemantus' vein. The importance of his writing was to show, first, what mine host himself thought of Will Shakespeare in the year of grace 1610—the poet then living on the best of terms with the innkeeper's family; second, and still more germane to the matter, what his good wife knew of Shakespeare's doings some dozen years before.

To the following purport, then, wrote John the vintner of Oxford:

'You are fain to know, good friend, whether I was cognizant of the contents of the packet which sent our gossip Shakespeare posting away after James Stewart. And as my memory has played me false in this,—if sobeit I ever was informed of the matter,—at your suggestion I questioned my Nan, and she, woman like, eager to have us think that her ear was for every secret, her finger for every pie, would have me believe that this mystery was clear as daylight to her intendment. And truly I will not say but that she hath held her own among the best wits, my Nan! What with her keen retorts and her gift for music on lute and virginal she could hale a man's soul out of his body, then, with her quick tongue, mock it back into place again! The best of poets, the finest of fine gentlemen, have thought no shame to sing her praises in ode, madrigal, and sonnet. Master Florio hath done it too, in divers tongues, Latin, French, and choice Italian, even in Greek and Hebrew they say—of this I am unfit to judge—tho' for poesy in the vulgar, God wot my taste is as pretty as any man's this side London town! It were otherwise strange, seeing what a friend I have proved myself to the muses' brood, Apollo's favorite children.

'Many whose career would otherwise have come but haltingly off may say as I do, "Where would so-and-so be to-day without the help and countenance of John the vintner; where Dick Burbage if his father's stable had not got credit and custom from the Golden Cross? Master Shakespeare too? Clerking it perhaps, in some scrivener's office, setting type in London, with his townsman, Dickon Field, or perchance teaching boys the hornbook in some country school. Not ruffling down Fleet-street in satin, Venice-lace and velvet, as those that go Londonwards report him.

'You would claim, perhaps, that men of such mettle find out their own occasions, and that the remedy for poverty and misfortune lies in themselves and not in circumstance! that stuff so rare was never destined for a common fate! I am not one to deny such reasoning. Yet it hath always been to me a thought, very sweet and comfortable, that his first golden guinea was earned in my inn-yard, helping Robin ostler to master a truculent jade that was like to have hurt his young Lordship, had not Will intervened, getting his foot partly crushed as the beast reared and fell over, from which mishap he hath indeed somewhat limped to this day; but it was this very accident and the service done Southampton that got a first hearing from that notable patron (than whom there was no better critic nor a surer judge of stage-plays). When the tragedians of the city came twice a season to thunder their blank verse in my inn-yard, they found our citizens all agog to see the new London success. The very children of whom Will was so fond would run miles along the road to greet his coming. Big Robin and little Will¹ being turned some nine, were ever of that gathering. It was a pretty thing to see the jackanapes,—Robin too shy to give the kiss he had carried so far, Will no whit encumbered with modesty, crying forth to the actors to list the verses he had written for their coming,—for even in those days the monkey could string rhymes faster than his Dad could broach a cask, and he bids fair now—if we list our townsfolk—to prove nearly as good a poet as his godfather.

'For myself, I am a plain man, neither gad-fly, wastrel nor unthrift, and no nearer to be a poet than just in this begetting of one so like to prove a favorite on Parnassus.

'Some say, as you in your letter, that Will is mighty changed, and I can readily believe it, for meseems his verse itself hath put on sack-cloth since my lord Essex' sufferings, and his muse drunk eisel and bitter potions.

'But though his philosophy hath, with Critic Timon, turned sour, I venture this will not last, rather, when his vein of *misanthropos* be worked out, he will shift to mellower mood, his natural bent leading him to conquer fate as already he hath conquered adversity. . . .

¹ William Davenant, Shakespeare's godson, and his brother Robert, who said, 'Master Shakespeare hath given me a hundred kisses.' William became poet laureate; his verse in remembrance of Shakespeare's death in 1616 was published in *Gondibert* in 1645.

'But I stray again from your question concerning the contents of that packet. Men whisper strange secrets there-anent, words so fateful that if spoke aloud thrones might totter and our England reel. But my wife says tales go wide of the mark, and affirms that, to her certain knowledge, the name signed to that paper was but Harry Rottesley,¹ and the purport—which she hath herself overlooked—much as follows :

'Tell Will Herbert if he love me to detain my bearer at Wilton till the hew-and-cry be over. He will know my mind in this affair, being one to understand that such a poet's life is more to England than his or mine or Robert Devereux's, yea, or James Stewart's self. Let him use discretion lest a careless word rouse our gentleman's suspicion. He hath a proud stomach my player, and is sharp set on Honour. Should he learn that we got him forth from London for no other purpose than that of saving his skin, and not to forward affairs of state, he would be mighty wroth. Blithe am I to have hit on this means of saving his immortal works from the clutch of that egregious knave, still smelling about to get our *Richard* burnt at the hangman's hands! But thanks to my good lady's forethought in removing the playbooks out of harm's way his spite hath overshot its mark and will fall, I trust, on his own mean pate. May it be well cudgelled for his pains, and would I might have a hand in it myself—your assured friend.'

'A strange thing it seems that a simple hodge like me, with no more science in numbers than can be done with a pair of tallies, and no claim to gentility at all—that a common fellow, I say, could never so grossly misconstrue Will Shakespeare, no, nor never so wrong a trusting friend as did this fair Adonis who, in seeking immortality for the verse, trampled the poet's heart which was that verse's well-spring.

'Belike, on the plea that "all was done in pure love," he hath obtained his friend's forgiveness. Never one to bear malice, even towards an enemy,—it is said that Shakespeare finds charity notably for F. Bacon, saying that his dame is curst and shrewish and the lawyer's own stomach none of the best!

'But forgiveness is one thing, oblivion of past wrong another, and to my mind Harry's self died for his poet, when the last illusion crumbled.

'For while simple folk like thee and me sounded the shallows of that nature, he, who in immortal strains sang of Harry, knew

¹ Rottesley was Southampton's own way of spelling his family name *Wriothesley*.

Harry not a whit! Into the fair chalice of an empty heart, the bard poured the golden wine distilled from his own genius.

'Must we believe, as he hath somewhere writ, that the eyes of love are ever blind—that the vision of hate alone descries the heart, as readily as a fly is seen through amber?

'A painful thought this! There comes to me a better way to solve this knotty problem. Is it not vain to set the seal of our weak judgment against the merits of one so worshipful as the same Southampton? Never outside the book you wot of have I seen perfect love but in one man, and one woman. Both were for this same peevish boy, violent and unworthy as he often appeared to our purblind sight, wearing his magic vesture like a giant's robe. . . .

'Nan, who hath held much converse with his Lordship, affirms that he carries a subtle charm to which high natures alone respond, that a gross lout such as I am, remains deaf to the music of his spirit even as to the heavenly melody of the spheres. Methinks this thought hath been better said elsewhere, perhaps by Will himself. . . .'

This, Sir, was the substance of what my Oxonian friend wrote of poet and patron. You may find it worthy of notice among those arcana which, you tell me, are set aside in some secret place, so that time, who hath more discretion than the scribbling age we live in, may consign it to oblivion or bring it to the view of posterity as chance or destiny may ordain.

Meanwhile I feel convinced that like myself you will wish to suspend rash judgment on the conduct of Harry Southampton—who grew into such a fine soldier—and whose virtues showed forth greener as his head waxed gray. Dare we indeed apply the measure of our small finite minds to one who hath found to sing his praises and set an immortal picture to deck the song, such a pair as were Harry's constant lovers? Such a wife as his fair Bess, and such a friend!—a wife without whose quick resolve and quiet performance there would have been no Hemming's Folio—a poet without whose work our English art would show forth poor indeed. ¹

¹ Aubrey's notes, which have come down to us through the Bodleian Manuscript (edited by Malone and Professor Andrew Clark), were originally prepared to aid Anthony à Wood in composing some of the biographies contained in the *Athenae Oxonienses*. But the learned antiquarian, fearing to be held responsible for some of his informer's seditious views, destroyed a third of the papers confided to his care. The reader is requested to believe (at least while reading) that this is one of the original number.

LONDON STREET NAMES.

BY ERNEST WEEKLEY.

MR. MENCKEN, on the subject of street names in England and America, observes¹ that

'Oxford Street, London, becomes the Bayswater Road, High Street, Holland Park Avenue, Goldhawk Road and finally the Oxford Road to the westward; and High Holborn, Newgate Street, Cheapside, The Poultry, Cornhill and Leadenhall Street, to the eastward. The Strand, in the same way, becomes Fleet Street, Ludgate Hill and Cannon Street.'

Very confusing to visitors, whether they come from the United States or from the English provinces, but an inevitable result of the way in which our ancient city has 'grewed.' The same phenomenon is to be observed all over Europe, *e.g.* the long arcaded street which forms the backbone of venerable Berne has, if I remember rightly, at least four names at different points. We are a slow-moving race. The Great Fire of London did not seriously affect the general lay-out and nomenclature of the City, and I doubt whether even the final triumph of democracy will succeed in acclimatising such convenient and rational addresses as 'Corner of Fifth and Forty-eighth.'

As London advances out to the mushroom suburbs, its street names are apt to reflect the poetic imaginations of the speculative builder, though the first transformation of Oxford Street into Bayswater Road is not without historic interest, for Bayswater, still rural in the eighteenth century, was, in the Middle Ages, Baynard's Watering Place, not a place of resort for tourists and invalids, but a drinking-place for cattle. This Baynard may have been the same great Norman noble of Domesday Book whose mighty London castle stood by Thames side and is still the name of one of the City wards.

As we go east, towards the heart of the City, all the names are historically interesting. Holborn was once the 'burn' in the 'hollow,' one of the many streams which intersected old London. Another of them was called Tyburn, probably because it ran through

¹ *American Language*, 2nd edition, p. 358.

a 'tye' or enclosed pasture. Here, until 1783, stood the great gallows called Tyburn Tree. The journey of the condemned criminal from Newgate to Tyburn was described in the seventeenth century as 'going west.' It was owing to the grisly associations of the name that the name Tyborne began, in the fifteenth century, to be replaced by Maryborne, now corrupted by way of Mary-le-bourne to Marylebone and perhaps generally misunderstood as 'Mary the good.' Newgate Street led through the 'new gate' in the western wall of the City. Like the Parisian Pont Neuf ('Vieux comme le Pont Neuf!') this 'new gate' was pretty old, for it is so called in the twelfth century and was originally built by the Romans. The famous gaol which bore its name from the thirteenth century onward underwent several reconstructions before its completion put Tyburn out of fashion as a place of execution. It was finally demolished in 1902.

Cheapside, one of the great shopping streets of the Middle Ages, was West Cheap (*i.e.* West Market) when William the Conqueror arrived, a name which distinguished it from the still existing East Cheap on the other side of the City. The Poultry reminds us that special trades once congregated, as in fact they still do, in special quarters. We cannot trace this market further back than 1273, but the Vintry, where the wine-merchants lived and traded, is recorded a century earlier. Ironmonger Lane and Cordwainer Street, where dwelt the workers in Cordovan leather, are equally old. Paternoster Row, under the shadow of St. Paul's, was, as early as the fourteenth century, the habitat of the makers of paternosters or rosaries. Close by are Amen Corner, Ave Maria Lane and Creed Lane, all probably named at a later date to harmonise with Paternoster Row. Then we have Milk Street, Fish Street, Bread Street, etc., not to mention various Tenter Streets, where the clothworkers once stretched their wares on 'tenter-hooks.' These names and dozens of the same type remind us that the City of London, now almost a vast nest of offices and financial establishments, was once a hive of craftsmen and retail traders. London Wall, the Old Bailey and Barbican tell us that it was also a mediaeval fortress.

With Cornhill we are back in the days when London had very much the aspect of a small provincial town. Here, says Stow, a corn-market was held 'time out of mind,' certainly as early as the eleventh century and very probably in the time of King Alfred. Leadenhall Market is modern London's 'poultry.' The beef-

market was also there in Stow's time, the great cattle-market of Smithfield having only in recent times been transformed into a central meat-market. This 'smooth field' (it is called *planus campus* in Fitz-Stephen's twelfth-century description of London) is also unpleasantly associated with the burning of Protestants by Catholics and of Catholics by Protestants in the age of the Great and Glorious Reformation. The Leadenhall, also called *la salle de plomb*, was an old City mansion of the great house of Neville. No doubt it was roofed with lead.

Mr. Mencken's alternative route to the City is via the Strand, which runs parallel with the Thames. The Strand was, as its name implies, at one time the shore of the river. This river-path, perhaps the oldest of all approaches to the City, was formerly dotted with noble mansions; among them, the great hospice of the Templars, whose gardens stretched down to the water-side, from which they are now cut off by the Embankment. It was in the Temple garden, according to Shakespeare,¹ that Somerset plucked the red rose and Warwick the white as emblems of the houses of Lancaster and York. Temple Bar, the gate from the Strand into the City, was removed in 1878, but the Lord Mayor still meets the King at this spot, when he bids His Majesty welcome into his civic domain and escorts him to the Mansion House. The jealously guarded privileges of the capital still prohibit any but one or two favoured regiments from marching beyond Temple Bar with fixed bayonets.

The Fleet, or stream, from which Fleet Street takes its name, is now converted into a sewer. It was probably the same stream as the 'hollow burn,' so that our bad habit of changing names half-way began quite as early as the twelfth century. The famous prison where Mr. Pickwick was incarcerated, and which is mentioned in 1197 as 'Gaiola de Ponte de Fleete,' no longer exists. At the bottom of Fleet Street we start up Ludgate Hill. Hardly any London name has been so repeatedly and inconclusively discussed. Geoffrey of Monmouth, who died in 1154, ascribes the construction of this London gate to King Lud, the brother of that Cassivelaunus who fought against Julius Caesar, and perhaps we had better leave it at that! Then we come to Cannon Street, one of the most extraordinary examples of verbal perversion to be found even in the fantastic history of the London streets. It is a comparatively modern alteration of Candlewick Street, but this in its turn is a corruption

¹ *I. Henry VI.* ii. 4.

of twelfth-century Candlewright Street, *i.e.* the street inhabited by the candle-makers.

There are plenty of other London street names which are not to be interpreted according to their surface meaning. One of the few historical truths which the schoolboy assimilates without difficulty is the fact that the Great Fire of London started in Pudding Lane and finally died down at Pie Corner. This sounds toothsome, but Pie Corner was named from an inn called the Pie, *i.e.* the Magpie, and pudding has here its original sense of 'innards,' Pudding Lane being so called 'because the butchers of Eastcheap have their scalding-house for hogs there, and their puddings, with other filth of beasts, are voided down that way to their dung-boats on the Thames.'¹

Many of the other City 'lanes' bear corrupted names. Gutter Lane was in King John's days Goderum Lane, possibly named from the famous Danish opponent (Guthrum) of Alfred the Great. Leather Lane was Loverone Lane, from an Anglo-Saxon lady called Leofrun. Godliman Street, which turns out of St. Paul's Churchyard, seems very appropriate to the neighbourhood of Paternoster Row, etc., but Godliman was once the popular pronunciation of Godalming in Surrey, whence came a particular kind of leather known in the Middle Ages as 'godelmyng,' which may account for the name of the street. Mincing Lane, now the centre of the tea trade, was Menechine Lane in the thirteenth century, from Anglo-Saxon 'mynecen,' the feminine of 'munuc,' a monk. It contained some tenements belonging to the nuns of St. Helen's, Bishopsgate.

This is an example of the large ecclesiastical element in the names of London streets. Mediæval London was really infested with religious communities. All sorts of friars have impressed their names on the map of the City. There are districts or streets known as Blackfriars (Dominicans), Greyfriars (Franciscans), and Whitefriars (Carmelites); the last-named, on the south side of Fleet Street, was a sanctuary for evildoers, the Alsatia of Scott's 'Fortunes of Nigel'; also Austin Friars, *i.e.* Augustines, and Crutched Friars, a minor order wearing a cross or 'crouch.' In Clerkenwell was a well which 'took the name of the parish clerks in London, who of old time were accustomed there to assemble and to play some large mystery of Holy Scripture.'¹ The Minories, near Tower Hill, is named from the Abbey of the Minoresses of

¹ Stow.

St. Mary of the Order of St. Clare, and the Charterhouse (French Chartreuse) was the headquarters of the Carthusians before it became the famous institution, where, as old Fuller says, 'children not yet come to, and old men already past, helping of themselves, have their souls and bodies provided for.'

With the friars go the churches, of which I can mention only a few. Gracechurch, which has given its name to an important City artery, has nothing to do with Divine Grace. It was originally known as 'grass-church,' from the local 'grass-market,' once equivalent to the 'hay-market' which has given its name to an important street in the West End. St. Mary Axe still possessed in the reign of Henry VIII. one of the three axes with which St. Ursula of Cologne and her eleven thousand virgins were decapitated. In the name of St. Mary le Bow or de Arcubus is preserved 'bow,' a stone arch, still used for the old gates of some of our provincial towns. In front of St. Andrew Undershaft stood the giant 'shaft,' or maypole, which, after a mad sermon preached at St. Paul's Cross by a puritan crank, was sawn to pieces and burnt, *temp.* Edward VI. St. Catherine Cree is from earlier St. Catherine Creechurch, *i.e.* Christchurch, with the same pronunciation that the French give to (Jésus)-Christ. St. Olave's, Southwark, was built by a Danish colony. It gave its name to St. Olave's Street, which, by the same process that made St. Audrey into 'tawdry,' and St. Osyth's Lane, in the City, into Sise Lane, became Tooley Street, famous for its three tailors and its great fire.

Another reminiscence of this Danish colony is the name English Ground borne by a lane near the church. The Danes were not the only founders of foreign colonies in London. Near Smithfield Market is Little Britain, where, in the Middle Ages, the Dukes of Brittany and their retinue had residences. Petty France in the City, once a French colony, has been swallowed up by New Broad Street, but there is still a Petty France in Westminster, near the Broadway. Petty Wales has disappeared from Thames Street. As early as the twelfth century bankers and moneylenders from Italy settled round the spot now occupied by the Bank of England, and gave their name to Lombard Street. Scotland Yard is associated with the London residence of the Kings of Scotland, though it no longer occupies the site of that colony. Until the Jews were expelled by Edward I., their ghetto was Old Jewry, the '*vicus Judæorum*' which we find mentioned about 1100. Since their return in the days of Oliver Cromwell they no longer live segregated,

but they still cluster most thickly in special districts, notably Houndsditch, which, in pre-sanitary days, was the place where dead dogs were deposited.

Practically all the names so far mentioned are in or closely adjacent to the City, the original 'square mile,' from which London has extended. Mr. Mencken¹ notes the English use of 'place,' 'walk,' 'passage,' 'lane,' and 'circus.' The last of these is not a City word and is comparatively modern. Other terms that might be mentioned are 'row,' 'alley,' 'court' and 'yard,' for the numerous little 'backwaters' whose existence in the City is often hardly realised even by Londoners. Pilgrims to the grave of Bunyan in Bunhill Fields cemetery, the '*campo santo* of non-conformity,' pass Bunhill Row, said to have been originally Bone Hill, from the cartloads of bones removed thither in 1549 from the charnel-house of Old Saint Paul's. The most famous alley in London is Change Alley, by the Stock Exchange, the scene of frenzied gambling at the time of the South Sea Bubble. This is known as 'the Alley,' as Scotland Yard is 'the Yard.' 'Court' and 'yard' are generally applied to small inlets behind old taverns. There are several Mitre Courts in the City, each corresponding to a Mitre Tavern, and it will be remembered that Mr. and Mrs. Plornish lived in Bleeding Heart Yard, a name not of Dickens's invention, though the place no longer exists.

As for 'road,' now commonly used for an urban thoroughfare, it does not occur, so far as I know, in the City. The sense we now give to the word is no older than Shakespeare. Before his time it meant a 'riding,' often an incursion or inroad. As travellers usually 'rode' in early days, the name was gradually applied to the great arteries which radiated from London into the country, such as the Old Kent Road, down which the Canterbury pilgrims travelled, and the Mile End Road leading into Essex. It was at Mile End that Wat Tyler's promising career as a social reformer was abruptly terminated. The mention of 'road' brings us to the decorative street-nomenclature of the suburbs, with their 'avenues,' 'crescents,' 'circuses,' 'terraces,' 'gardens,' etc., sprinkled about without any regard to the real meanings of these words. M. André Maurois, the brilliant author of 'Ariel,' complains pathetically of the complications of London geography: 'A Londres Cromwell Place est une rue, Cromwell Gardens n'est pas un jardin, et Hyde Park Terrace n'est pas une terrasse.'

¹ *Loc. cit.*

'Avenue' is very modern in London. I fancy that Northumberland Avenue, leading from Trafalgar Square to the Thames Embankment, via the former site of the Duke of Northumberland's house, is about our oldest. The first 'circus' of houses was built at Bath in the eighteenth century, and likened by Smollett, in 'Humphrey Clinker,' to 'Vespasian's amphitheatre turned inside out.' It was also at Bath, the eighteenth-century focus of fashionable life, that the Royal Crescent came into existence, to be imitated in less favoured localities. The Royal Crescent, where Mr. Pickwick took the upper part of a house for self and friends, was the scene of Mr. Winkle's adventure with the bloodthirsty Dowler. It is possible that Adelphi Terrace, the work of Robert Adam and his three 'adelphi,' was the first English architectural 'terrace.'

In this brief article the examples, taken almost at random, represent only a microscopic portion of the vast field for etymological investigation offered by London street names. The great fascination of the 'lure of London' is undoubtedly to be found in the ancient heart of the sprawling colossus, but the outlying parts also contain interesting kernels, old homesteads and landmarks swallowed up by the ever-rolling stream of bricks and mortar. Within a few hundred yards of the house in which I am writing is Gunnersbury railway station, linked through the ages with the 'bury,' or manor, of Gunhilda. I do not know who she was, but her name is charming. Over the other side of London lies Brixton, which sounds, and is, as commonplace as possible. But it takes its name from 'Brixi's stone,' which stood there before the Conquest. Was the stone a sacrificial altar and Brixi a heathen priest? It is not at all improbable. Even in names given within historic times London seems to me to surpass all other capitals. What town in the world can boast three such intriguing names as Pimlico, Pall-Mall and Piccadilly?

AMICI DI MILANO.

MILAN, for most English travellers, is but a stage on the way to Italy. Here are certain inevitable sights to be seen, which mainly come under the head of antiquities and the *belle arti*. During the Austrian domination, and still more during the short but brilliant regime of Prince Eugène, Milan's gay social life was a European attraction, but the Milan extravagantly eulogised by Stendhal is now no more. The daily throng of promenaders under the lofty Galleria, however interesting to the visitor of to-day, could only appear a sombre and monotonous horde compared with the Corso of a century ago, when Austrian hussars regulated the pace of magnificent equipages; and the great theatre of La Scala, still incomparable for its music, has become a democratised temple of international art, whose boxes are no longer the salons of an exclusive aristocracy. Unless they come to study singing, the English of to-day seldom stay in Milan beyond the few days prescribed by Baedeker for the conscientious tourist. They then take train to a more obviously Italian Italy—northward to Como and Maggiore, eastward to the fire of Venice, southward to Tuscany, Umbria, and Rome, or westward to Rapallo—and, in retrospect, having lingered in pleasant and picturesque spots where, with her white villages dozing on the generous shoulders of tree-clad hills, her campaniles, her vines trailing over mulberry bushes, her white oxen, her shady villas and her wonderfully composed landscapes, Italy inexhaustibly fulfils the romantic but rather self-centred dreams of chilly Northerners, they remember Milan, not as a city, but as a repository, dreary in itself, of aesthetic pleasures more or less intense.

It would be difficult to avoid this first impression. One is bound to begin by 'numbering the stars one by one'—Baedeker's stars, *bien entendu*. Yet, in the course of admiring (or not admiring) the stupendous Gothic traceries of the Duomo, of crawling round the masterpieces of painting in the Brera and Poldi Pezzoli galleries, of gazing with emotion upon Leonardo's 'Last Supper' in Santa Maria delle Grazie, of wandering through the interminable rooms of the Castello Sforzesco, and of not at all sufficiently enjoying the magnificent exterior of that huge red fortress, a miracle of loving restoration, the tourist gains but a vague impression of the city and

its people. He remembers, perhaps, a not particularly attractive climate, a paler sky than that of Tuscany, long streets flanked by high buildings of dark grey stone, solid but seldom charming, much noise of motor-horns, and everywhere a crowd of indistinguishable but busy people in sombre city clothes, neither expansive nor picturesque, who walk hurriedly on narrow pavements and squeeze insufferably into trams at noon. 'Milan is not Italy,' he says—a judgment of which his words only skim the truth—and thenceforth he changes trains at Milan with all possible celerity.

Fortunately, there are other impressions to be had of Milan, but only at the price of going back once, twice, many times, leaving Baedeker behind and not grudging golden days of holiday to that sober city set in the interminable Lombard plain—days that might have been passed in gondolas, under pergolas in Tuscan villas, among olives and cypresses, or in the contemplation of white beehives impassively proceeding. One does not grudge days, however precious, to friendship; and friendship for men and women, however begun, breeds a friendship for buildings, for streets, for cities, let them be as thronged, busy, noisy, and grim as modern life can make them. Milan has other beauties than the Duomo seen by moonlight or the cloister of Santa Maria delle Grazie, but they are less obvious; and, indeed, beauty is a feeble word to express that strong inner sentiment that may invest a coffee-bar or one sooty grey façade out of many with a light of which all you can say is that it is the light of poetry. Notwithstanding all the raptures of the purely aesthetic tourist, who exerts himself only to see objects, the knowledge given by the human approach, which seeks to know things through people, is more profound, more lasting, and, I believe, more valuable. Thus approached, Milan can show aspects of individuality and charm known to few travellers of to-day; but more English travellers might know them were the capacity to converse in Italian not so lamentably rare in our nation of wanderers.

A visit to the masterpieces in the Brera Museum is doubtless a duty and a pleasure; but the light that, for me, irradiates the somewhat dingy Via Brera does not shine from the gloomy portals of the Palazzo, but from a humbler spot close by. Almost part of that grey mass itself, crushed under the weight of its stately architecture, is a shop—just a ground-floor front of a large building, like so many shops in Italy. The windows, not specially built for the display of goods, are simply those first pierced by the architect in the original walls. Such is the Libreria di Brera,¹ a business one

¹ Since these words were written, my booksellers have left this bookshop.

room deep and four rooms long, where in the two left-hand rooms a proprietor-in-chief sells antiquities of art, while in the two right-hand rooms two sub-proprietors sell books, new and second-hand. No partitions divide the two businesses; the light is dim, and bare boards form the floor; cash-registers and pay-desks have no place. Tourists, issuing from the Museum, occasionally step in here to buy an old picture on the one side or a guide-book, a Tauchnitz or the latest Dekobra novel on the other; but they would not realise that the farthest window and the two last rooms of the Libreria di Brera form something more than the ordinary bookshop of commerce. Mr. Bernard Shaw, attendant upon ladies, sat down in here not long ago, and a few days later newspapers all over the world were quoting a charming article from the *Fiera Letteraria* in which one 'Apollodoro'¹ revealed the secrets confided by our dramatist to the black cat of the establishment. Mr. Shaw, even he, did not know into what an uncommon bookshop he had penetrated, nor what a bookseller had served his ladies. Apollodoro, who had the wit to write so graceful an article, had also the good manners not to address uninvited his customers' celebrated companion. He is not the man to take unwarrantable liberties, even for the sake of journalistic gain; and nobody was more surprised than he when correspondents of foreign papers seized upon his contribution to a purely literary weekly as something important to telegraph home, while Italian journalists, having fruitlessly haunted Stresa, turned green with envy. That indifference to journalistic *réclame* was typical of Apollodoro, who has only recently taken to bookselling as an escape from the tiresome exigencies of modern journalism. Author-booksellers are not unknown in this country, but in Italy the material prospects both of authorship and bookselling are far more humble than in England, so that Apollodoro and his modest business symbolise for those who know them the frugality, the seriousness and, I would even say, the heroism of all in Italy who, disdaining cheap compromise with commercialism, steadfastly serve literature and the arts.

It is when daylight is failing and custom is dwindling that I like to visit the Libreria di Brera. Towards five o'clock when a few hanging lamps throw a restful downward light, leaving the bookshelves deep in shadow, I know that I shall find Apollodoro sitting behind the baize-covered trestle-table at the mouth of his cave—the windowless end-room, with its two plain kitchen chairs,

¹ Those who read the admirable Italian chronicles in the *Monthly Criterion* can easily discover his real name.

that is both office and reception-room. The rays of the lamp above him accentuate the calm seriousness of his young and striking face, the two volutes of dark hair that decorate his broad forehead, the large, grave, dark eyes, the full lips, the small pointed chin. It might be the face of one of the young men who, in a canvas by some great Lombard master, mildly but without superciliousness regard the suffering or the triumph of a saint. That expansiveness which we think typical of all Italians is not his : in his handshake, his warm but unemphatic smile of welcome, the quiet tones of his 'Come sta?' he might almost be an Englishman, though he could never learn the bluff unceremoniousness of an Englishman whose 'Take a pew' is less charming than Apollodoro's 'Si accomodi.' Beside the table will certainly be Apollodoro's partner, or rather joint adventurer, who deals in second-hand books, while Apollodoro deals in new. Let me call him 'Pellegrino,' for he is a man of many travels, often on foot, in Russia and the Near East. Here is a marked contrast. While Apollodoro is tall, slim, and rather silent, Pellegrino is small, stout, vivacious, and full of conversation. He is a man of infinite jest and strong emotions, with a love of good wine, good company, good literature, and also of his fatherland, which gives passion to his independent political opinions. He has twinkling eyes and a mobile mouth, and when he tells a story, describes a person, or expounds a view, his hands assist with a perfect expressiveness of mobile gesture. He can be *lirico* or *buffo* as he pleases, and the cheerful liveliness which he contributes to the conversation in that back shop, whether music, politics, literature, or wine be the topic, could not be overestimated. Life for those men is not all roses, but Pellegrino is one of those invaluable people who keep up the courage of others and never lose their own.

At this hour of the day these two comrades will not be alone ; or, if I am their first visitor, I shall not have long to wait for followers. Apollodoro, an author himself of high critical talent and a deep but poetic reflectiveness, is a friend of many writers. Some meaner jackals of the press may sometimes snarl at him because from his sincere criticisms of the spiritual state of the modern world he does not exempt Italy, nor invariably refer to her as a new Jerusalem, glossy with every virtue ; but he has friends enough among the younger writers of Italy ; and these, whether natives of Milan or passing through, come, like me, to visit the cave and sit on the kitchen chairs talking and talking until it is time to shut up shop. On a lucky day, for instance, Carlo Linati will turn up from Como and bring in with him all the air and spaciousness of the

lovely lake he loves so well—Linati with the features and manner of a cavalier, wide, dark eyebrows, aquiline nose, and a tall body which, at rest, takes the natural pose of a *gentiluomo*. Though quite unlike Apollodoro, a good deal older and a writer of more widely recognised distinction, particularly in the *genre* of impressionistic nature-prose, he has a strong community of feeling with the younger man. Indeed, the friendship of these two *lombardissimi* is very intimate: and nothing pleased me more than the frank admiration expressed by Apollodoro when, after we three had lunched one day in an hotel on the lake of Como and Linati had risen to speak to an acquaintance, who was none other than a victorious marshal of the Italian army, he whispered to me 'Ecco due uomini illustri'—and he himself had been a gallant officer. When in a cheerful mood, that comes more often in the country than in a town, Linati with his wide, flashing smile is the nonpareil of geniality. To see him enter the room and, at a chance remark, to hear him cry, 'Ah, perbacco!' and sit violently rubbing his hands with glee is a tonic in itself. Yet he can be melancholy, too, as if a mind so attuned to Nature must be, like her, capable of every mood. Perhaps that is why Linati, an unusually acute critic and devoted lover of English literature, is so whole-heartedly an admirer of the English; his passionate soul envies—though why?—our stolidity, our deliberateness in action, our equanimity, even our somewhat proud reserve. Yet he must feel a sympathy for the Irish too, or he could not have translated *The Playboy of the Western World* into Italian—an heroic feat not properly appreciated by the Milanese public, who found the play, when staged, revolting to their moral sense.

Who else may drop in to pass the time of day? It may be Piero Gadda, with his young, sunburnt face and spare, athletic figure, looking rather severe in his khaki overcoat, speaking little and scarcely betraying the poetic imagination that made his tragic story, 'Liuba,' so remarkable. It may be Titta Rosa, the philosophical critic, bringing a bundle of proofs which he at once begins correcting at the trestle-table. It may be one or another of the young group who contribute to the slender but excellent monthly review *Solaria*, or it may be Riccardo Bacchelli, poet, novelist, ironist, and essayist, who belongs to no group but is welcome in all. Amid the agreeable smoke of Macedonian cigarettes the conversation rolls on for an hour or so, without formality or constraint. A new book, a leading article, a project or a personality may form the topic; Pellegrino may intervene with a comic anecdote, or Bacchelli

with a fluent disquisition on political history, or a moment may come of enjoyable polemic, one of the fine arts of Italy. The eloquent apostrophe, the devastating simile, come easily to Italian lips, and though, when the heat has cooled, the speaker may apologetically remark to me : ' *Noi italiani siamo sempre maldicenti*,' he is not really penitent. Faction and love of debate which is anything but abstract or impersonal are deeply engrained in the Italian nature, as history shows ; and a foreigner who lives much with Italians cannot fail to observe how strong, in spite of national unity, are regional differences, and how fondly kept alive. An Italian has not simply national characteristics, but is born with the virtues and vices of a particular province or town, of which birthplace he inherits all the traditional animosities. A Lombard speaks of a Tuscan, a Tuscan of a Lombard, and both of a Romagnole, with an ancestral hostility ; and this, though naturally modified to reasonable proportions among intelligent men, adds a piquancy even to the desultory conversations held in Apollodoro's Libreria or in the more elegant and spacious surroundings of *Il Convegno*.

I need not here speak of the importance of *Il Convegno* as a literary review, well known to be one of the best in Italy, nor of the services which its reading-room, lecture-room, and library render to the cultivated society of Milan. I mention it rather as an institution flourishing under the beautiful carved ceilings and among the frescoes of the Gallarati-Scotti *palazzo* in the Via Borgo Spesso, where there is to be gathered an impression of Milan also not mentioned in the guide-books, but well worth having and particularly accessible to foreigners, for the *Convegno* has assumed also the functions of a branch of the English P.E.N. Club. Its rooms are a place of literary rendezvous, both for Italians and foreigners, which owes its popularity not only to its frescoed walls and its display of European publications, but most of all to the energy and geniality of its director, Enzo Ferrieri. To be welcomed, in his resounding and hearty tones, into the stately back chamber that is his office, to hear his vociferous interventions in the discussions of the *habitués*, or to be entertained, at no matter what inconvenience to herself, by the charming and vivacious lady who is his wife and coadjutor, are experiences not quickly to be forgotten. After half an hour at the *Convegno* it would be impossible ever to think again of Milan merely as a stagnant repository of art treasures : the animation and keenness reigning at No. 7 Via Borgo Spesso would quickly dispel any such illusion.

The Libreria di Brera and the *Convegno* happen to be literary

meeting-places, but my point is not so much the interest for which they stand as the friendships which they make possible. A foreigner with other interests would find other gates to lead him beyond the tourist point of view, but they would lead him in the same direction, towards an intimacy with Milan that transforms external phenomena into parts of a living experience. To have joined, for instance, with two musicians in a furious discussion as to the new technical possibilities latent in the 'yatzb'n'—as they somewhat surprisingly style the jazz band—gives a café table at Savini's, indeed the whole echoing vaults of the Galeria, a warmer tone, henceforth; to have walked round and round the Nuovo Parco behind the Castello in converse with a painter makes its alleys and green spaces mean more for you hereafter than just any park in any city; again, to have been invited by no matter whom into one of the innumerable and ever-busy bars where one buys a ticket for a cup of coffee or a glass of ice-cold vermouth and takes one's drink where one stands in a good-humoured jostle, is to have taken one more step into the frugal and none too leisurely heart of Milan.

I confess that those café bars, the rapid dexterity of their servers and the ceaseless movement of their customers, fascinate me. They exist, not to provide expensive cocktails or copious pints of beer, but as conveniences for people who eat but twice a day and do not wish to linger over the drinks between. At Milan, when the weather is fine, I can no longer breakfast at my hotel, but must go out fasting, buy my *Corriere* at the paper-stall outside La Scala and dive into the bar hard by, where, as I sit on a stool in a corner with my back against the plate-glass window, I can drink my cup of steaming hot coffee and milk, produced in the twinkling of an eye, though freshly made, from the huge nickel urn, and observe the other breakfasters, business men, clerks, neatly dressed typists and shop-girls stream in, one after the other, take their coffee at the counter and, in a few minutes, go about their business. The bustle of Milan has an individual tone: it is the bustle of a great city, but not so grim and mechanical as to disgust; just as its crowds are dense at certain times and places, but are not, as in Oxford Street, a congeries of agitated and mutually repellent particles. Everybody strolls up and down under the arcades of the Galeria because they wish to stroll there and touch elbows with all the rest of Milan, while the trams gyrating round the cathedral make a thorough bass to the hum of voices. To be truly a part of that crowd one must not be alone: one needs a Milanese companion with whom one is going to lunch or dine, or has already done so, in

some *trattoria* or *osteria* far outside the ken of dwellers in the large hotels. One bumps along then, busily talking, with a glance now and then at the best side of the Duomo, and the moments pass as quickly and unperceivedly as the couples of pert and pretty girls who agreeably diversify the sombre mass of the male debaters.

Along this way and beyond, up the Corso Vittorio Emanuele, Riccardo Bacchelli took me the day when he invited me to 'fare un po' di folklore' in the matter of a midday meal—Bacchelli with his monocle, his carefully turned-back gloves, his French 'r's' and his flow of exquisitely turned discourse delivered with a cadence all his own. Suddenly, as we were discussing his remarkable novel, 'Il Diavolo al Pontelungo'—one of the few really ripe and extended novels published in Italy since the war—he dived up a narrow side street and in at the low door of an establishment bearing the title of 'Osteria Toscana.' To judge by the customers in its front room an Englishman might have been excused for thinking himself in one of those modest eating-houses which in England used to exhibit the legend, 'A good pull-up for carmen.' Eating-house it is, but not only for carmen. In the back room, which is as simply furnished in essentials as the front, one of the L-shaped tables along the wall is permanently reserved, and from the company seated at it there rose, as we entered, loud acclamations of 'Ecco il Presidente!' I looked round the walls and observed that they were decorated with a comic painted frieze of motives from the harlequinade, among which the most remarkable was a representation of Bacchus, reclining in extreme undress, the face of the god bearing an unmistakable likeness to my host. Under this jovial painting, in fact, Bacchelli, having introduced me all round, took his presidential seat; and I found that I was the guest, and thenceforth free, of a convivial society comprising journalists, writers, painters, and etchers who have made that humble *osteria* famous in Milan. They eat there daily, and sometimes, of an evening, I was told, song and sally were kept up at that table in Bacchanalian crescendo until the small hours. That was a piece of folk-lore for which I was not fortunate enough to come in. There was little, in fact, that one could call folk-lore about the proceedings at lunch, unless it was Bacchelli's assumption for a moment of the carnival turban, girdle, and chain, which are the presidential insignia for state occasions: but the cordiality and vivacity of the conversation, not to speak of the performance of the *Fiera Letteraria's* caricaturist on the back of the bill of fare, were a sufficient charm in themselves. There was, however, a certain folk-lorism about our meal, since

stewed cuttlefish and a curious dish of pig's liver served on a skewer surrounded by cabbage-stalks formed part of it. And there was something legendary, too, about Ugo, the friendly waiter, the perfect type of coffee-house waiter, but a man tinctured with letters who, in the intervals of serving, mixed freely and effectively in the conversation. Ugo's best stroke was delivered when, the company having thinned, the two or three remaining were hotly debating some point of sexual ethics: at the decisive moment Ugo produced from his pocket an Italian translation of Tolstoy's 'Kreutzer Sonata,' and held it gravely up before the eyes of one of the debaters, remarking that there was the moral—an intervention certainly beyond the normal capacities of any 'plump head-waiter at the Cock.' It was a meal, in fine, that gave a particularly rosy tone to a subsequent exploration, in company with Bacchelli and my caricaturist, of the wonders of Sant' Ambrogio, followed by a drive home alongside the old canals where Milan preserves more than anywhere the aspect of a century ago, when Carlo Porta described in Milanese verse the comic misadventures of Giovannin Bongee.

After such experiences—simply noted here as typical of possibilities—one may hold the city in affection without being presumed to posture like Stendhal. And, after affection has drawn one to Milan, less to see its sights than to take part in its life, one begins to realise what kind of error and what kind of truth may lurk in the light remark that 'Milan is not Italy.' It would certainly be an error to suppose that the unity of Italy does not include Milan, though a certain traditional liberalism is to be found there. One would also be very obtuse not to observe that, in another sense, Milan is very much Italy, even to the degree of exciting jealousy. She is not only a chief centre of communication with the rest of Europe, but also, where the arts and literature are concerned, no matter what Rome or Florence may say, she is the capital. On the other hand, the interesting sense in which Lombardy and particularly Milan are not Italy depends less upon their landscape or their architecture, their lesser luminosity and dimmer colour, than upon the effect which geography and history have had upon the Lombard and Milanese character. The people have more than a tinge of Nordic blood; and the rich plain and its great capital have always fallen a prey to invaders from the North—German, French, Spanish, Austrian—whose rule at various times, however unpopular, stitched them more firmly than the rest of Italy into the fabric of greater Europe, and gave their people a certain sympathy with Northern

principles of government and with Northern, especially with English, temperaments. Thoughtful Lombards of to-day realise, a little regretfully, this division in their souls: their Nordic affinities will not let them rest content with the *esprit de clocher* and that strictly parochial *italianità* of which some other Italians are apt to flourish the banner. Nobody has more brilliantly and sympathetically expressed this peculiar difference than my friend Apollodoro in an article recently contributed to an English review. He explained there that the typical Italian was a man of a village, and that to be born and bred in Milan makes a man an 'Italian with a difference, outside tradition,' who may envy his compatriots the peaceful native retreats to which they can always betake themselves for refreshment, but who cannot pretend to any rustic affections of his own. Where then can he, the Northerner, find an equivalent poetry to that of the campanile and the olive grove? In the modern age and in the great cities of Europe, he replies: 'I seem to understand the kindliness of that hour between twelve and one, when armies of workmen sit round the factory walls eating their dinners; I love the weary gaiety of parks enclosed in great capitals, the nocturnal solitudes of vast city squares and morning departures from great stations . . . it is all a love without hope, but inevitable. There is nothing to be done: one cannot renounce one's origins. I look towards Europe. For us citizens of the North, even if we rebel, there is another life outside the traditions of Italy. And another literature.' The image, the painful and travailed image, that he finds in his heart is of *Europe illuminée*, which symbolises not only power and vastness, but 'a humanity aching to find again the peace of the country, aching to pick the roses of the South—a humanity suffering in a dream of power which only God can judge and only God, perhaps, will punish.' To this Europe Italy must, will, and does even now belong. She is no mere museum of antiquities or aesthetic playground, but a hard-working nation severely handicapped. And if some Italians err by wishing to approach Europe in the old, factious, communal spirit, which was all very well when Florence fought Pisa and Prato was at daggers drawn with Pistoia, Milan has another way of approach, less picturesque and possibly less traditional, but more civilised and far more understanding. Yet the understanding from within must be met by understanding from without: and it were only to be wished that all travellers to Italy thought as much about understanding as enjoyment.

ORLO WILLIAMS.

LITERARY ACROSTICS.

THE fifteenth series of Literary Acrostics begins with No. 57, printed below, and will run for four months. Prizes to the value of at least £3 will be awarded to the most successful solvers. There will also be consolation prizes, two or more in number : the winners of these will be entitled to choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue. And, further, every month a similar prize of books will be awarded to the sender of the correct solution that is first opened.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 57.

(The First of the Series.)

'Not a —— was heard, not a funeral ——,
As his corse to the rampart we hurried ;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.'

1. 'Ye banks and braes o' bonnie ——,
How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair ?'
2. 'See, how she leans her cheek upon her hand :
O ! that I were a glove upon that hand,
That I might touch that cheek.'
3. 'O —— judge ! Mark, Jew : O learned judge !'
4. 'All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the —— raths outgrabe.'

RULES.

1. Only one answer may be sent to each light.
2. Every correct light and upright will score one point.
3. With his answer every solver must send the coupon that is printed on page x of 'Book Notes' in the preliminary pages of this issue.
4. At the foot of his answer every solver must write his pseudonym (consisting of one word), and nothing else. His name and address should be written at the back.
5. Solvers must on no account write either the quotations or the references on the same paper as their answers. It is not necessary, or even desirable, to send them at all.

6. Solvers who write a second letter, to correct a previous answer, must send the complete solution as they wish it, and not merely state the desired alteration.

7. Answers to Acrostic No. 57 should be addressed to the Acrostic Editor, THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE, 50A Albemarle Street, London, W. 1, and must arrive not later than May 21.

ANSWER TO No. 56.

1. L	ucum	O
2. A	le	F
3. S	ardanapalu	S
4. T	horea	U
5. R	isingha	M
6. O	pprobriu	M
7. S	ens	E
8. E	asie	R

PROEM: Moore, *Irish Melodies*. 'Tis
the Last Rose of Summer.

LIGHTS:

1. Macaulay, *Lays of Ancient Rome*.
Horatius.
2. Kingsley, *Hereward the Wake*, ch. 2.
3. Byron, *Sardanapalus*, i. 2.
4. Emerson, *Miscellaneous Pieces*.
Thoreau.
5. Scott, *Rokeby*, vi. 21.
6. A. Austin, *Prince Lucifer*, v. 10.
7. Peacock, *Crotchet Castle*, ch. 2.
8. Ben Jonson, *The Forest. Song, to*
Celia. See also *Volpone*, iii. 6,
Song.

Acrostic No 55 ('Jests Scars'): There were 122 answers received altogether, of which 61—exactly half—were entirely correct; the second and fourth lights were the easiest, and were known by nearly every one.

The monthly prize is won by 'Girlie,' whose answer was the first correct one opened. Miss G. Miller Wilton Lodge, Staines, will choose books to the value of £1 from Mr. Murray's catalogue.

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